

A Question Of Egress Denied

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Serious crime "speaks out", but *murder* shrieks at the top of
its voice, on and on and on and on!

Introduction: "That Bloody Door" won't go away!

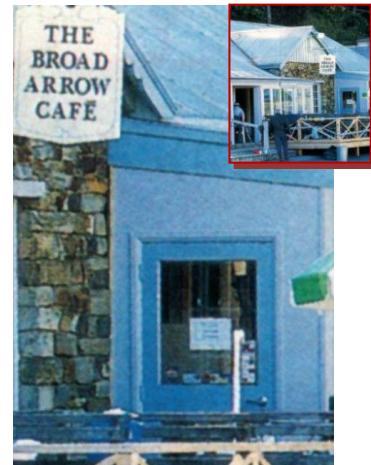
We have all heard that old adage, 'murder will out'. The most astute felon employing the simplest plan thought 'fool proof', often has believed, 'Well, I've got away with that!'; "the perfect crime". It seems some prosecutors in Tasmania at least are not exempt from such situations either. For presenting false evidence as 'fact' to aid in convicting innocent pawns are not uncommon there. But eventually and bit by bit evidence filters to the surface and a piercing shriek in unison from those who know better will be heard throughout the community. In The Queen v Martin Bryant, if new evidence is brought to light then at the least, should not the entire case be subject to reconsideration?

Some may no doubt find this proposition preposterous. All too often one hears that quintessential "British" type stiff upper lip advice; "It's time to move on." But how can we all move on, when so many issues were never examined without prejudice, dealt with properly so as we can put the matters to rest? To that end, I can assure you, never before has all of the following material been assembled into one document for the public's consideration. So I urge you to please put on hold any preconceived position you may have reached in this case, until you've considered the revelations exposed here in this work. For in the long run, the *status quo* is quite unacceptable.

In 1996, as the days shortened and winter was settling upon the Tasman Peninsular, a significant number of the staff of Port Arthur Historic Site (PAHS), decided to ignore their superiors' directive, to '*cease all discussion about the inoperable Gift Shop door in the Broad Arrow Cafe*', and so they began to ask more questions. The 'inoperable door' became the stand-out subject of discussion during the aftermath of the tragedy of April 28th 1996, and in spite of strident attempts by management to bury the matter, "*That bl..dy door*", just would not go away.

This work is entirely focused upon the **Gift Shop fire escape door in the Broad Arrow Cafe**. The narrative, presents for your consideration my latest findings, and the individuals whose actions, inaction and reactions that are pivotal to the outcome of that horrific event known as the Port Arthur massacre of 28th April 1996 are put on the public record. Established as a penal settlement in 1830, it was twenty years later that the infamous Separate Prison was built there and man's inhumanity to man became the order of the day. When the reader has reached the Conclusion to this article, you may well believe that same dark spirit that emerged 146 year earlier reappeared there in 1996.

The players caught up in the web of deceit that followed the Port Arthur massacre are laid bare in this narrative. They range from ordinary people going about their normal work-a-day lives, right up to and including people in positions of trust in the State's highest public office and the Commonwealth too. **Some have abused the community's trust I believe and have concealed a serious crime**, while others are no less than heroes. But importantly this story has never been told. As you read on, I hope you come to understand, my work should not be seen as ignoring or devaluing the lives of any of



29 April 1996: The Gift Shop "Fire Escape" door. Note (RH) mounted at chair-rail height, an external brushed-chrome handle of the #929 Lockwood *Exterior Escape Deadlatch*. Affixed by management to centre of the glass panel, an outward facing "Notice" to: **"USE OTHER DOOR".**

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the other victims and or the families affected by the events that occurred at any of the other six crime scenes of the shooting massacre at Port Arthur and the drawn-out aftermath.

Many of the staff members who defied their superiors' directives, mentioned in the narrative, worked their rostered shifts on the Historic Site that autumn Sunday of April 28th 1996, the day their world suddenly went quite mad. This 'madness' is the substance of evil, a spiritual influence already addressed in my earlier work.¹ Even as early as sundown that Sunday, a stench indicative of a cover-up was enveloping everything. For as these staff members were raising concerns among their colleagues, when combined, evident anomalies only ever increased in number and in scale. One must not forget, many of the deeply concerned staff directly affected by the carnage that day, were at day's end, grieving for blood relatives and loved ones deceased. Many among those staff were already by that time aware that in their mind, the 'inoperative door' had in a significant way, contributed to the deaths of at least two of their colleagues and possibly many more visitors besides. After all, both deceased staff members in the Gift Shop had a number of relatives and loved ones on site or thereabouts on that day! Recently Mrs. Scurr explained that immediately following the tragedy, "*At least a dozen colleagues raised their concerns over the door with me over this period.*"

Acting upon information conveyed to me directly in 2008 by a most reliable source, I was compelled to re-investigate the whole matter of the inoperable Gift Shop Door in the Broad Arrow Cafe, and publish my findings. This time my source conveyed to me disturbing information that allegedly named the key person who physically interfered with the normal operation of the door in question, so as allegedly the door was made "inoperable". I had heard of the story before in the late 1990's, but at that time its receipt was a matter of hearsay, and so I was averse to publish it.

Knowing of probable obligations in such circumstances that I was now subject to, under the Crimes Act of New South Wales, this convinced me to revisit these serious matters of the Gift Shop door and include the latest revelations in the hope that the truth of the matter may be known, and to publish all in the public interest.

As the narrative unfolds you will come to realise, that at the time people were dying inside the Broad Arrow Cafe on the 28th April 1996, the man who allegedly had earlier some days before, wielded hammer to nail-up the Broad Arrow Cafe Gift Shop door and he becomes central to this segment of the overall massacre story. Recently identified to the author by a very reliable source, the person was at the time, employed by the Port Arthur Historical Site Management Authority (PAHSMA) as an on-site maintenance carpenter.

Many of the most serious allegation and certain admissions, made to the author, are not at odds, but complementary to the earlier information I had collected concerning the Gift Shop door. But with the persons now identified to me by my reliable source, this development forced me to publish.

At this juncture I should make several points very clear: In publishing this work, the author has given much sober consideration to the possible ramifications, both to himself and those who are named in this work. Should I have chosen not to publish the information, given freely to me by the reliable source, I believe I could well be in breach of the law as it stands in NSW. For the record shows that the "*Concealment of a serious offence*" can be harshly judged by the Courts, as such inaction is in itself a breach of the law under **section 316(1) of the NSW Crimes Act of 1900**.

It is not for any investigative journalist to judge alleged actions of people involved in serious offences. That responsibility rightly lies with State and Federal prosecutors. So I make no apology here for raising matters of the Gift Shop door, and I earnestly hope and pray that God Almighty may have mercy on those whose alleged actions and or inaction are herein exposed. For I believe it is their

¹ Ref: CD-ROM, Deceit & Terrorism, rev. IV of "A Gunsmith's Notebook on Port Arthur", Chap.1, *To Everything a Season.*

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actions or inaction, that could well be seen as the actual substance of concealment of a most “serious offence”. Only an independent Coronial Inquisition can make findings which survivors of this massacre have for so many years cried out for, and then the Coroner should rightly ensure his/her findings, whatever they may be, are properly dealt with in a Court of Law, before a Judge and a Jury of our peers.

On the road to belling the “Cat”

The ramification of the latest revelations delivered by my source, requires us to revisit the whole subject of the Gift Shop ‘Fire Exit’ door, and to do so demands we reconsider many key issues of the shootings, which occurred inside the Broad Arrow Cafe, including the distasteful aftermath of this tragic incident and the resultant awful effects upon that forgotten group, *the survivors* and their families.

At page 109 of the Court Documents for THE QUEEN v MARTIN BRYANT, the DPP, Mr. Damien Bugg QC stated, "... *Peter and Carolyn Nash, were ... in this area of the premises. They moved to the door out of the gift shop area...but, unfortunately, that door was locked.*" – My emphasis

‘The door out’: What a quaint way for Damien Bugg to have described a “Fire Exit” door or a “fire escape door” don’t you think? But as you consider the role of various public officials in this matter, quaintness may turn to a personality trait you may come to dislike immensely.

This so-called ‘statement of fact’ made by Mr. Bugg’s the Tasmania DPP, claiming “that door” was locked is a bare-faced lie he chose to utter with foreknowledge: The door was NOT locked; it was inoperable.

There is a subtle, but important difference. Mr. Bugg referred to this door with its inoperable Exterior Escape Deadlatch, as ‘**the door out of the gift shop area**’ – a quaint phrase I would suggest - and this door was then a fixture in the short, exterior, south-eastern wall, of the Gift Shop (see photograph page 1). But if you visit the shell of the Broad Arrow Cafe today, still there tucked away among the landscaped, mulched, gardens and shrubbery near to the memorial pool, you must understand what you see is a contorted remnant of the former Cafe: you are *not meant to find* the doorway where the Gift Shop’s “Fire Exit” door was once a fixture.

The architects behind that so-called “partial demolition” of the Broad Arrow Cafe, I believe, deliberately chose to destroy all likeness to the cafe’s appearance as it was on 28 April 1996 — and they did a good job! Numerous partitions once divided and blocked off many of the openings now evident in the former Port Arthur Football Club rooms; a sure way to prevent visitors any chance of interpreting what occurred there in 1996.

But *the door* Mr. Bugg referred to, swung onto an open balcony deck (see again photo page 1), adjacent to the eastern wall of the building. Now woodchip mulch over a garden bed in that area facing Mason Cove prevents interested visitors any external approach to that threshold. Back then, immediately inside that Gift Shop exit door, a small storage area or airlock existed. Importantly, though Mr. Bugg misled the Court with his claim above.

The “Fire Exit” door, or as Mr. Bugg so coyly puts it, ‘*the door out*’ was in fact fitted with a #929 Lockwood Exterior Escape Deadlatch, designed to provide egress at all times to anyone within the building. All of the evidence I have considered on the matter – and there is a large volume of it – tells me that on the day, when the internal door handle was operated, the door refused to budge, but importantly the latchset was designed so as it could not have been internally locked; the external handle in the #929 latch set is keyed, so as to allow it to be locked or operable by choice from the outside.

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There is but one explanation as to the fitment of this type of latchset: the Exterior Escape Deadlatch was fixed to this exterior door, so as to:

1. Comply with the Australian Building Code, and to,
2. Fulfil the requirements of security and safety stipulated by regulatory authorities to all owner/operators of such commercial premises and as was drawn to plan.

From the 28 April 1996, *that door* became the subject of endless controversy that has been central to many of the grave concerns expressed by those who lost their loved one/s among the seven (7) persons who died, because they were denied egress, when trapped behind a door they could not open.

As well, I believe it can be strongly and successfully argued that even those who escaped with their lives but likewise were trapped and hiding in or about the Gift Shop area, suffered a degree of trauma only extended and therefore heightened by the “Fire Exit” door being inoperable that day.

These aspects alone were given a degree of attention by the authorities outweighing many of the other disturbing aspects of the massacre that together amount to an immense and evil, cover-up.

During the early days when Andrew MacGregor and I investigated these matters, we learned of information circulating that *the state of the alleged “broken door lock” was reported and acted upon by a member of the Port Arthur Historic Site maintenance crew, who under instruction simply nailed the door shut, prior to the massacre.* But at the time, we both adjudged this information, correctly I believe, to be then hearsay. But information received from my reliable source confirms the crucial aspects of the role played by Mr. John Edwards, a former on-site maintenance carpenter, and so I was compelled to put the matters on the public record: For now ‘the cat is out of the bag!’

In reopening my investigation, I found it necessary to again approach the St John’s trained First-Aid Officer and former Port Arthur Information Officer and tour guide, Mrs. Wendy Scurr, so as to refresh her memories of that day and the aftermath. Recently I conducted another interview with Wendy Scurr concerning her actions directly related to the Gift Shop door issue. I found her answers clear, straightforward and her memory of those events scrupulous:

At the time shots were still coming from the direction of the Toll Booth on Jetty Road, and Mrs. Wendy Scurr recalls crouching among the bush on the high ground above the Cafe where she triaged a male who identified himself as Dennis Olsen. When Wendy Scurr questioned him as to his wounds, *“he opened his shirt and pulled his singlet aside. His numerous wounds were not irregular or jagged – all were small, round, raised and dark, with minimal bleeding. They didn’t appear to be wounds made by bullets, or bullet fragments. In my opinion, I was looking at wounds consistent with those made by shotgun pellets. I’d say the shot size was about the same as farmers use.”*

Considering Olsen’s wounds were in no way life threatening, Wendy decided to turn her attention to regaining the Broad Arrow Cafe, even as loud gunshots still were “banging away” from the direction of the toll-booth. Scrambling down the steep cliff where she says, *“I barked my shins and knees,”* she made her way quickly to the rear door to the Cafe kitchen, where she was joined by two colleagues, Steven Howard and Sue Burgess.

About to enter the back door, Wendy was stopped in her stride, when Sue Burgess shocked her by saying: *“Wendy, you know Nicole and Elizabeth are both working in the Gift Shop.”* Of these two females; Nicole was Mrs. Burgess’ 17-year-old daughter and ‘Elizabeth’ was Steven Howard’s 25-year-old wife. At that instant, as you can imagine, Wendy’s anxiety levels ‘went through the roof’, as she opened the kitchen’s back door.

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With a mix of apprehension and adrenalin still flooding her body, Wendy entered ahead of her two colleagues: '*what mayhem will confront me*,' were the thoughts that flooded her mind as she made her way through the kitchen she told me. No years of training, or even the many horrific road crash cases she'd dealt with as a volunteer "ambo" on the Peninsula, could have prepared Wendy for the sight that met her eyes.

As Wendy picked her way over bodies and through the total chaos, fleeting observation too awful for inclusion here, have lived in her mind's eye to this very day. As Wendy recounted making her way to the Gift Shop counter, "*The floor was awash with blood...*" she told me. Within the Gift Shop area "*a sort of partition*," blocked her line of sight, but looking down and to her right, immediately behind the shop counter there lay the bodies of two females whom she instantly recognized by their dress as colleagues. Hesitating, Wendy instructed her two colleagues following behind to '*Please stay back*'.

Driven by years of St John's First Aid training, instinctively Wendy checked both bodies for a carotid pulse. But Nicole and Elizabeth were both deceased. Turning about she could not lessen the shock of this shattering reality to her good friends and workmates whose loved ones lay motionless: "*I told them there was nothing I could do for either of the girls: they are both dead.*"

Wendy Scurr's job description at Port Arthur was that of Information Officer, but having been highly trained by St John's Ambulance in First Aid, and indeed a volunteer Ambulance Officer with the Tasmania Ambulance Service, appropriately Wendy was the Port Arthur Historic Site (PAHS) First Aid Officer and Trainer. Out of the blue, this mass shooting had catapulted, Wendy Scurr into the unwritten position of staff member in charge of the Port Arthur Historic Site incident scene.

As if guided by an unseen hand, Wendy had even very recently trained both Sue and Steven in First Aid as indeed she had done for so many of the staff working there that day. As she told me, "*Boy, did I need these people now.*" Thinking quickly, Wendy's professional training came to the fore as she instructed Sue and Steven - for their own well being - to both '*Please leave the Cafe and go outside*,' and proceeded to point out that as Sue Burgess was a manager, she was indeed required immediately to employ those skills and her authority, outside which Wendy realised was surely an equally tragic scene. Wendy relegated Steven to go '*in search of blankets*' for the wounded and survivors who were already showing symptoms of the onset of shock.

200 Mystery Army Blankets

During my interview, Wendy reminded the author that just '*a week or two earlier*', a mysterious shipment of surplus Australian Army blankets were delivered to the Historic Site. As Mrs. Scurr explained, the arrival of those blankets caused staff some puzzlement as no one was aware of an order having been raised for their supply. As Wendy explained, "*A large shipment of about 200 Australian Army issue blankets were delivered, even although no one I spoke to knew who ordered them or what they were to be used for. I was really puzzled when they were delivered.*"

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Wendy also told me that even although in her position as Historic Site First Aid officer and trainer she was responsible for stocks on hand and orders of all First Aid supplies, "*I had earlier decided the Site already had sufficient blankets on hand for any normal emergency,*" she said.

Mrs. Scurr is adamant about this aspect of the blanket incident: Working to a strict budget with limited funds, her supervisor insisted on a prudent approach to the purchase of such items. "*We already had enough blankets for any normal emergency, which in my role as First Aid Officer I had earlier checked out thoroughly,*" Wendy emphasised.

Knowing a mystery delivery of 'ex-army blankets' was stored somewhere on-site, Wendy "...*thought Steven would surely be able to locate them with the assistance of Mark Kirby.*" In fact though, neither could locate the blankets at first, until Athol Bloomfield came on the scene and as he'd actually packed the blankets away, the cache was then recovered. "*Those additional blankets seemed rather a convenient stroke of luck and we needed all of them,*" Wendy explained.

With these tasks in hand, Wendy continued to check for victims in the Cafe dining room and triage survivors who were still clinging to life and to delegate urgent tasks among other volunteers from the pool of visitors who were straggling back to the Cafe. Early in this process, Wendy re-entered the Gift Shop area and it was at that point she discovered more victims; five bodies, all "*stacked in there,*" – her words - close to the exterior, mortised glass panelled Fire Exit door.

Mrs. Scurr first checked for vital signs of the closest victim to her (the victim furthest away from the door); this person was deceased, but the body was draped across another victim's legs. Of the other four, "*I really couldn't get a look underneath to check for vital signs,*" Wendy told me, as they were all piled, one on top of the other. "*They were just too heavy for me on my own to separate them.*"

At this point and looking through the glass door, Wendy saw a male standing outside close by and decided she should ask for his assistance in untangling the four bodies so as to enable her to check for their vital signs. As she didn't want to subject this man to the carnage strewn throughout the dining room, she attempted to open the exterior Fire Exit door onto the balcony so as to then motion him to enter by that way and then to assist her.

Wendy explains: "*I leant over the bodies and grabbed the door handle and the door wouldn't open. I tried really hard to push the door open. Because I had to lean over the bodies – I couldn't get hip and shoulders on it or anything like that. But the door handle went down, but it (the door) wouldn't open, it wouldn't give.*"

Importantly, by "*moving the handle down,*" and at the same time "*pushing hard on the door*", Wendy Scurr is adamant, the door would not move: the door was not jammed in the door frame; the latch felt as though it was working but the door was simply *immovable* and would not open.

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No one on the Historic Site at that time knew how many gunmen there were, or indeed where they were. At that instant, Wendy Scurr's survival instincts kicked-started; *"If a shooter returns, I'm trapped,"* she told me. No one on site even knew the whereabouts of the blonde-headed gunman who'd escaped up Jetty Road in a yellow Volvo, nor if he would return.

Although regarded as fantasy by Bugg when stating facts to the Court, a detailed, sworn, signed Statutory Declaration made by Sgt Gerard Dutton, the forensic firearm examiner with Tasmania Police, is entirely at odds with Bugg's theories when he states, at:-

28. Also on 2 May 1996, I received from Constable Burnett of the Scientific Bureau, Hobart, the following exhibits:

- 64) Four bullet fragments. (In two plastic jars, labelled in part):**
 - (a) "Croswell, gunshot pellet, right buttock, x 3 fragments."
 - (b) "Walker, gunshot pellets right foot, right upper back x 2." End quote

Here Sgt Gerard Dutton confirms by a sworn statement, that lead pellets fired from a shotgun were collected from several additional victims wounded while inside the Broad Arrow Cafe during the shootings there. In the case of the American, Dennis Olsen, he was bussed to RHH, where he arrived at 1813hrs, Sunday 28th April, and his wounds were triaged as Category #3 and after "pellets" were recovered, Olsen was shifted to Ward 3. These facts confirm not only that a shotgun was discharged inside the Cafe, but the facts strengthen considerably the probability of there being two shooters. For Bugg's tainted synopsis of 29 shots in 90 seconds is easily destroyed by empirical evidential material and simple math additions, as I demonstrated in my earlier work. At least 41 shots were fired inside the Cafe over a period of up to 5 to 8 minutes.² So Mrs Scurr was well justified as to believing there was possibly, *two shooters, and if so, where were those shooters now?* Remember that when Mrs. Scurr had earlier triaged Dennis Olsen, on the hill behind the Cafe, she noted his numerous superficial, pellet wounds, to 'face and chest' and immediately recognised those wounds as having been caused by a **shotgun**. End of interview on 30.07.08 of Mrs Scurr by the author.

It is very understandably that Wendy felt trapped and helpless among dead bodies 'stacked up there' and I'm caused to reflect; to what degree did the inoperable Gift Shop "Fire Exit" door experience, contribute to the ongoing battle with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder among all of those survivors who were in proximity of that door on that tragic day?

As more people filtered back to the Café environs to offer assistance or look for missing companions and loved ones, a Sydney orthopaedic surgeon Dr Bill Maguire and his wife Dorothy entered the Café to offer assistance. Although Bill had seen the horrors of battle injuries serving as a doctor with the Australian Army in Vietnam, the scene that confronted he and Dorothy, stunned him: *"I never saw anything quite to equal what I saw when I went inside the Broad Arrow Café,"* including a *"...pile of bodies – six or seven of them – at the door where they had attempted to get out."* Here Dr Maguire is definitely referring to the Fire Exit Door that had been nailed-up before the massacre.³

² Ref. A Gunsmith's Notebook on Port Arthur, Chap 4, "Trojans Bearing Gifts", pp.62-65, CD-ROM Deceit & Terrorism etc. Rev., IV, May 2008.

³ Julie McCrossin, ABC Radio National, "Life Matters" 17aug05

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In the days following the massacre, Wendy Scurr, Steven Howard and Sue Burgess were joined by a growing number of PAHS staff who literally felt abandoned by management who deliberately chose to have issued a dubious instruction to all staff: *“Do not speak to anyone, especially the media, about anything to do with the massacre.”*

Shortly though, these staff members were introduced to a technique ages old, whereby one counsellor in particular (almost surely the psychologist from Dubbo NSW, Ms Natalie Ayres), who from the outset, divided staff into two groups: those unwilling to blindly accept the ‘management’ line, and those who were more amenable. Among the latter group of staff, seeds of doubt were sown so as to nurture mistrust towards any staff who dared to even ask questions. Some were subtly advised, 'don't talk to her' or 'don't talk him', as the case may be. It appeared like as if the “thought police” had been deployed! After all, that is a technique as old as time, used by interrogators to extract admissions, confession and accusations: simply divide and conquer. Once sown, those seeds of doubt have, as I have discovered, remained active for at least the decade following the incident!

As well, other individual staff members were approached and told to cease all discussion of the massacre with their workmates and the subject of the “that door”, was singled out and made especially taboo. But that was just one among a growing number of disturbing anomalies emerging from out of the massacre itself and its aftermath. But even ‘the door’ could be seen as secondary to these questions:

1. Why did it take Tasmania Police more than 6 hours to respond appropriately with a unit or units of sufficient strength to protect the 500 plus visitors, 50 staff and emergency services personal and their own unarmed constables all there on the Historic Site that encompassed 4 of the 7 crime scenes?
2. How can Tasmania Police justify their response as “appropriate” when a lone Det. Const Peter Hessman, armed with just a handgun, was delivered by a fellow officer (who himself departed) to the Toll Booth at 1626hrs (zero+3:36min) and in support Constables Ali Denns and Rhani Ahmed – both delivered by helicopter, both unarmed probationary female constables – at about 1730hrs (zero+4:02min)?
3. How can Tasmania Police justify their response as “appropriate” when a single armed Det. Const plus two probationary unarmed female constables (a ration of approx 183 members of the public to each constable and for 3hr 4min), until at about 1930hrs (Zero+6hr 2min and 2hr 15min after sunset) when an SOG unit arrived on Site to escorts terrified staff and visitors from the shelter of cottages, to a safer environment, 60 minutes after 3 shots had been discharged close to Clougha, one of the cottages in which some of these people had been sheltering?
4. As a consequence:
 - a. Approximately 150 people were unnecessarily subjected to an extended term of terror surely resulting in horrendous psychological damage having been trapped on-site for 6 hrs and 2 minutes.
 - b. 4 on-site crime scenes were totally compromised, and
 - c. The person or persons remain unknown whom discharged the 3 further shots near Clougha at 18:30hrs. Or do Tasmania Police expect the public to believe Martin Bryant was able to be yet again in two places at once or that he had an accomplice – who was never caught?

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During the forenoon of Sunday, 28th April 1996, ten of the Historic Site managers were whisked away for a two day seminar in Swansea on Tasmania's East Coast. Their scheduled latest, departure time from the area was set down as 'no later than 1100hrs' that Sunday. This departure time ensured Andrew Simmons and his wife – the family who lived close by and up the hill from Seascape cottage – were witness to two shots fired at 1040hrs that the Prosecution maintain killed David Martin inside Seascape.⁴ Though curiously, no agenda for this 'manager's retreat' was ever issued even although the sleep-over seminar was a precedence setting event, as is addressed by Andrew MacGregor on the CD-ROM, *Deceit & Terrorism*.

One among those PAHS managers, who chose to ignore the management enforced gag in the days following the tragedy, was Robyn Cooper. Robyn went far beyond her duty by personally supporting her staff to search for answers to the legitimate concerns they raised, even disregarding the consequences of her bold stand upon her health and career. Over the next decade, Mrs. Cooper chose to travel extensively around Australia, supporting Mrs. Scurr, Andrew MacGregor and I, and Robyn even addressed some of those public meetings herself. Clearly, a significant segment of the public soon realised a massive cover-up had enveloped the tragedy, although these same members of the public informed, outraged and angry, were obviously short on courage.

Delivered: An Instrument of Control

The on-site controversy over "that door" and the escalating agitation by concerned staff members as to how they perceived the inoperative condition of the Gift Shop door had contributed to the deaths of two of their colleagues which eventually drew a sharp response from the Historic Site Management. On 20th February, 1997, a two page Staff Memo was circulated by PAHSMA. This memo had just five names authorising its circulation: David Scott, Ben Galbraith, Mike Grieves, **Lesley Kirby** and Barbra Stacey (my emphasis). The subject of the memo was noted as: "**Port Arthur Incident Recent Media Speculation**". Oddly though, the 'subject' that prompted Management's action here was addressed within just two of the last paragraphs of this 2-page memo.

The tone of the document is suggestive of management making a knee-jerk response to a mounting disquiet among their staff and by the word choice, obviously panic had taken hold. However, this panicked attempt to dispel the increasing staff concerns caused many of the Historic Site staff considerable outrage. The memo demanded an urgent need to: "...bring some control to the situation." The authors might as well have come right out and said they needed to kill the messengers, as it left the reader in no doubt this was *an instrument* conveying nothing less than *damage control*. One instruction clear conveyed an instruction to cease all debate and discussion among the staff and any media interested in reporting on concerns about any "inoperative door".

In fact, the document's content confirmed that it had been the disturbing allegations that came to light during a Television current affairs program aired the previous Tuesday evening that was the catalyst that triggered Management's Memo. For these allegations were suggestive of, '*on-site intervention by unknown person or persons*' as having subtly influenced an adverse outcome at the Fire Escape Door at the Gift Shop in the Broad Arrow Cafe on that awful day in April 1996 at Port Arthur.

The Staff Memo confirmed the transcript of the news item which raised the probability that of the twenty people shot to death inside the Broad Arrow Cafe, '*seven deceased inside the retail [Gift Shop] area may well have been alive today if that door had been operable.*' – my emphasis.

⁴ During an extended period whilst sheltering with Const Pat Allen in an Arthur Hwy culvert outside Seascape entrance on the afternoon of the 28.04.96, Const Gary Whittle states in his debrief statement taken at 11.25pm that night, and in part: "At one stage saw a female running around the back yard naked. Yelling and screaming." If this female was not Sally Martin, then who was she?

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So again it was this memo's text that was inferring that an "inoperable" latch-set of fire escape door that was the reason behind the door probably being "locked"; it was suggesting that an unfortunate quirk of fate was the factor that had made the door inoperable and no more. This was not a new found position for the authorities though. As from the outset and when confronted by staff concerns of '*probable human intervention*' being a factor which should have been a factor considered as to why the door had been 'stuck fast' and 'inoperable' on the day, caused those in authority from an early stage to instantly shift the blame towards inert objects. After all, do you know of a latchset to ever have argued its own defence?

In light of the tone of this staff memo, I would argue that alone demonstrates management had an agenda from the outset to blur certain elements of known facts which if generally known would adversely reflect upon PAHSMA; this process was doggedly pursued and amplified by subsequent experts and official reports. After the release of the Report authored by Mr. Max Doyle in June of 1997, the degree of vagueness in describing the Escape Deadlatch latch-set in the door just increased.

On the other hand this author has not found it difficult to positively identify the latch-set, even from the noted abilities and limitations of the latch-set as described in these official documents. The latch-set in the mortised-framed, glazed Gift Shop "Fire Exit" door was a **#929 Lockwood Exterior Escape Deadlatch**. Now that didn't hurt a bit I may add. But for those producing official reports, the process of describing the latch-set with accuracy was just too hard! It '*might be*'; it '*probably is*'; they were the typical, lethargic descriptions.

The designation is clear: The latch-set was engineered to fulfil two specific roles; one of providing security to a building when fixed to an "Exterior" door, importantly a role determined by the operator of the premises, while simultaneously ensuring all persons within the building could "Escape" – egress – at all times, unrestrained and unrestricted; a mandatory requirement under the lawful Universal National Building Code in force at that time.

If desperate State and Federal politicians and bureaucrats, had been excluded from the process of examining the subject, then the truth of the inoperative state of door would have escaped their interference, and the community of the Tasman Peninsula and indeed the truth itself could well have reached an angry and betrayed general public nationally. But to their evil grasping mind-set, that would never do. Such transparency would have definitely not been *kosher*! We can only speculate as to what the outcome would have been, had the public been allowed to consider all of the facts surrounding the inoperable Gift Shop door, before the Sentencing Hearing of Martin Bryant.

Within all but one of the official reports, falsehoods have been promoted that 'it was just by chance' an alleged 'faulty latch-set' was responsible for the door being inoperable at that critical time. The deceptive propositions put forward even publicly by Ray Groom at least, who brazenly suggested '*even if the door had worked*', it was "debatable" that should those inside the Gift Shop have been able to exit via that door, they may well not have done so into any safer environment.

Groom's proposition is unsustainable. At the time those people inside wished to egress via the Gift Shop Fire Exit door, the gunman was *not outside*; the gunman was *inside* shooting people dead. As this article shall establish shortly, such terms, conclusions and propositions more than misleading; they are flawed and dangerous excuses at best. I firmly believe Mr. Groom at the time he made those excuses was very aware they were indeed erroneous.

The staff memo promoted a long-winded argument as to the status of the door. Obviously the author/s simply wanted to cover their backsides and those of their masters so as not to draw attention to the fact PAHSMA had for commercial reasons alone, downgraded their public risk insurance to

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exclude murder and suicide! Like a child caught with a hand in the biscuit tin, PAHSMA management just wanted all the staff concerns and questions - to evaporate quickly.

PAHS Management and their political masters were adamant that members of the public inside the Gift Shop retail area while the shootings were in progress, had no reason to even expect *the door* could provide them with any passage to a safer environment. What outrageous balderdash!

Within the two pages of the PAHSMA memo, the writer became deeply engaged in making a case against those who *dared* to demand the matters of grave concern be dealt with in a transparent, impartial manner. After all if that occurred it would have ensured their colleagues who died there in the Gift Shop did receive impartial consideration and a measure of *justice*. For the survivors, such absolutes with the benefit of hindsight were almost a desire bordering upon the impossible.

If an open, impartial, inquiry had been conducted as is required by the Coroners Act 1995, that was in force at the time, free from all influence of politicians and their 'mates', the careers of signatories to that Staff Memo would not have survived. Remember, that in spite of the law prevailing at the time of the massacre at Port Arthur, were 35 persons died by various criminal acts and 21 sustained injuries, the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth brazenly advocated on national television, that there would be no Coronal Inquiry. John Howard stated that he didn't want the survivors and or their families to be subjected to a coronal inquisition. The Howard led Liberal Party had just 56 days earlier been elected to the government benches of the Federal Parliament, but importantly Howard had no jurisdiction whatsoever over the Tasmania Coroner.

Coroners Act 1995, [Tasmania and part thereof].

Under the Heading, "Jurisdiction of coroner to hold inquest into a death" and at;

24. (1) Subject to section 25, a coroner who has jurisdiction to investigate a death must hold an inquest if the body is in Tasmania or it appears to the coroner that the death, or the cause of death, occurred in Tasmania or that the deceased ordinarily resided in Tasmania at the time of death and –

a) the coroner suspects homicide; or etc, and the list continues.

In hindsight, I would have to concede, in Tasmania the influence of political networks ensure strange outcomes in criminal matters; in the island State, that is the norm. To assume any inquisition will be mounted as a matter of course in Tasmania (or NSW), one would have to believe in the tooth fairy.

So 'he who pays the piper' was yet again to 'call the tune'. PAHSMA was created by the legislative process in the Tasmania Parliament. This means the State Government was the *owner and operator* of the commercial enterprises known as the Port Arthur Historic Site and the Broad Arrow Cafe.

As a consequence, the State Government was the *employer* of all staff and sub-contractors on the Historic Site. It then follows that the State Government of Tasmania was liable for persons so described as well as the welfare of all visitors to the site. In fact, directly because of these facts, it fell to those people residing in Tasmania to actually pick up the bill should their State Government have been neglectful of their insurance responsibilities in such matters.

So the State Government was the employer of the two, young, female victims who were shot and killed behind the counter in the Gift Shop. Consequently the ramifications were indeed grim for management, the Minister responsible, the State Government and all Tasmanians. For it was upon the shoulders of those at the helm of this State Enterprise that the liability 'buck' should have stopped!

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The finger of scorn points directly at the Hon. Ray Groom, *Attorney General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Workplace Standards and Minister responsible for the Port Arthur Site*; yes Ray Groom was the grand ‘Poo-Bar’! It’s not surprising, that over this period Groom was often referred to by locals as the ‘Minster for everything to do with Port Arthur’.

The distribution of the Staff Memo of 20 February 1997, only ever amplified the outrage in the minds of the families and loved ones of staff who died in the Gift Shop area, not to diminish its radiating effects of trauma among these groups, after they learned of the insensitive choice of words in that document, in which the concluding paragraph reads:

"Our role in all this is to ensure we don't add 'fuel to the fire' - by getting drawn into a volatile emotional debate, and that we don't bring each other down - by discussing 'what if' scenarios until we all become manic depressives." End quote, my emphasis.

Obviously, at the time this Staff Memo was signed off on, the author/s wished to impart the view that some at least of the staff employed there were *already* “manic depressives”!

These unfeeling, offensive words eventually found their way into the public domain when the Doyle Report was later released, and more on this shortly, save to say, a copy of the Staff Memo is included in the June 1997 Doyle Report, as attachment No. 9.⁵

But PAHSs board of management, with their haughty posture, chose to deny and ignore reality.

- **Management argued the “Fire Exit” door was ‘not in use’ that day.**

I would have to concede, no one was attempting to escape flames – just bullets!

- **Management argued the door was not a public access.**

ACCSESS has never been the issue: its latch-set was designed to allow the enterprise operator that choice. But no mention is made of at least five visitors and two staff, trapped near the door as bullets were killing people all about, as they desperately tried to egress via their only escape option; the Gift Shop “Fire Exit” door. These people were not attempting entry.

- **Management argued the door was ‘used infrequently’.**

Ooh, here management has tripped-up! So PAHSMA admit the door was in general, “use” as the adverb “infrequently” is only suggestive of the degree of admitted usage.

- **Management argued “the door was not a ‘required exit’ as defined in building regulations”.**

Required or not, the door was a physical fact, fixed on hinges in an exterior wall, fitted with a #929 Lockwood Exterior Escape Deadlatch and as drawn to plan and the Australian Building Code (ABC) made it *mandatory*, such a door must be operable and accessible to facilitate egress to all people inside the building at all times and unrestricted.

Mandatory within the ABC of that time in offices or buildings used for professional or commercial purposes, is the requirement such doors must provide **“all access and egress be kept clear and operable at all times”**. The arguments used by PAHSMA exposes a cavalier attitude and contempt towards the Australian Building Code by further admitting no **EXIT** sign had ever been affixed to indicate the location of that exterior escape door – surely an admission of yet a further serious breach of the ABC!

⁵ Refer to the CD-ROM, Deceit & Terrorism – the massacre at Port Arthur, File: Doyle Report.

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The Day After: Monday April 29th

Don Woodland, back then a Major in the Salvation Army, and two accredited psychologists, Captains Howard Smartt and Peter Fathing, his 'trauma management team', all attired in their smart uniforms, finally touched down in Hobart after many hours of aeroplane 'hopping' from Sydney (NSW) to Melbourne (Vic) then Hobart (Tas).

Tuesday April 30: After a good night's rest Don Woodland and his colleagues collected a government arranged car and drove directly to Nubeena, west of Port Arthur, arriving at the Community Centre there around midday.

That morning and among what surely was heavy traffic on the Arthur Highway, a Workers Compensation officer based in Hobart, Ms Pam McPherson, also drove down to the Peninsula. Wendy Scurr recalls, "*I remember Pam well. Of all the MMI Insurance personnel Graeme and I dealt with, Pam McPherson always showed us sympathy and understanding for the rotten situation we all were suffering.*" Continuing, Mrs. Scurr recalled that, "Pam McPherson personally, did her very best I'm sure to assist Steven Howard too," and at times Wendy was aware McPherson, "*often expressed frustration and she told us she was uncomfortable with all the instructions that constrained her wish to assist us.*" From the transcript, survivors who participated in the September 2000 teleconference convened by Senator Harris (Qld), it becomes very clear that red-tape interfered to a great extent in their workers' compensation and insurance claims settlement process.

But when Pam McPherson arrived on the Peninsula she needed initially to set up an account for claimants, so she phoned the local chemist with that purpose in mind. I understand that Walter Mikac took that call; he'd just lost his wife and two daughters that Sunday, shot and killed on Jetty Road. A 2008 article published by GIO tells us, Pam McPherson and her colleagues, '*proceeded to set up counselling services to start dealing with the extensive psychological damage,*' among the members of the Peninsula community in which McPherson explains, "**People were walking around like zombies. ... It was eerie,**" she was quoted as stating.

In the article Pam McPherson recalls her efforts to avoid the harms caused to Peninsula claimants by the claim protocols in place and it gave her, '*a lot of satisfaction from seeing people get over something like [the massacre].*' Although here I believe Pam is being a little circumspect, for I'd suggest few of the surviving former Historic Site staff and perhaps many of the community besides, will EVER entirely get over their experiences of that tragic day.

I have no doubt Pam McPherson personally went that 'extra mile' in an effort to assist MMI's clients and was reported further to state, "*I think it's important to manage [workers' compensation] claims with empathy. Plus you need to come up with innovative ways to get people past the barriers that stop them returning to work.*"⁶

But as Don Woodland alighted from the team's government arranged car, a female pushed her way through the crowd of counsellors just arrived from Hobart and pleaded for him to straight away talk with '*a very distressed lady*' on the telephone, who was desperately seeking assistance - not from counsellors - but rather from the '*trusted Salvation Army.*' Don Woodland learned the caller had assembled 18 fellow staff members of the Historic Site, all of whom remember had earlier been instructed by their Management, to "*talk to no one*".

While these 18 staff members had survived the massacre without apparent physical harm, Don Woodland discovered all eighteen persons exhibited worrying health symptoms only ever emphasised, by what he later described as a "*wall of isolation*".

To that point in time, none of these eighteen staff members had received any assistance whatsoever. They were in reality, 18 emotional "time bombs" - with the fuses burning.

⁶ Workers Compensation – GIO newsletter – winter 2008, Issue 8, p.10

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After establishing that the lady was able to drive to the Community Centre, Don Woodland promised he would stand out front on the street so when the caller arrived, she could not mistake him in his full Salvation Army uniform. So standing there in the middle of the Nubeena Street is where Don Woodland initially met Mrs. Wendy Scurr - the voice on the other end of that desperate phone call.

With Mrs. Scurr at the wheel, Don Woodland and Howard Smartt were driven to her Nubeena home where in the lounge room the Salvo's were introduced to eighteen of Wendy's fellow Historic Site staff members seated about the room. That meeting in the early afternoon of 30 April, 1996, left Maj Don Woodland with an impression he will never forget and to read his recount later published is quite chilling. He recalled that in his professional judgement, all 18 people were, "...totally terrified and traumatised from the sights, smells and sounds of the carnage they had witnessed."⁷

Initially, after, "...many moments of pandemonium and expressions of anger, grief and emotion," Don Woodland sought to explain how, in a limited way, he and his colleagues could assist them. He reassured them, they needed to accept and understand their behaviour was entirely normal: "You are reacting normally to an abnormal event", he reassured them.

Don Woodland was horrified to find, that until that midday of Tuesday of April 30th – 48 hours after the 8-9 unbroken hours of full-on terror and trauma – not a single executive, board member or indeed even the manager Craig Coombes, had made any attempt whatsoever to contact any of those eighteen staff and volunteers, so as to ensure they all received some form of assistance.

I believe this inaction alone examples the indifferent, uncaring even negligent attitude of management, that was not rectified I may add, over the following 13 years. The author having on several occasions over the ensuing years visited the Historic Site, with its deliberately altered landscape, I can personally attest to a noticeably "cold" reception from the normally light-hearted information officers, I recognised as former staff, almost surely because of the company I chose to keep on those visits!

After sixteen years, Wendy Scurr told me recently, "To this day, Graeme and I have never taken so much as a phone call from a single (PAHS) board member inquiring after my welfare or how I was getting on." None among those eighteen staff members, whom Don Woodland consoled that day, have fared any better either.

To the contrary, when the Historic Site staff filtered back in and reported for duty, they were immediately subjected to a re-enforced isolation and silence – upon the orders directly from PAHS Management team. But here we must regress a moment to consider as to what the Management were a party to and the basis by which they justified ostracising the so-called "ring-leaders" who'd made a claim that some 'members of the staff have been abandoned.'

PAHS Management (possibly acting upon the orders of a higher authority?), convened the first of what they audaciously called a "debriefing session", late on the night of the tragedy. I'm confident none of the Management would dare challenge my judgment that this get-together, or debriefing, was in reality nothing less than an unnecessary interrogation.

For this is the description used by several former staff I have questioned on the matter: "They just kept on pumping us all for information about the massacre," one staff member explained.

I'm not overstating this aspect when I say their "debriefing" could be likened to the time honoured utilitarian methods employed by Port Arthur gaolers - a hundred and fifty years earlier!

Nothing has changed: the century alone has moved on...but the penal mentality remains unaltered.

Remember, it wasn't until 1930hrs, on the day of the massacre Tasmania Police finally chose to appear on site in numbers. Put another way, it was **6hrs and 11 minutes** (sunset plus 2hrs and 15

⁷ *Picking Up The Pieces*, Lieut-Col Don Woodland, OAM, with Simon Bouda; pub McMillian 2006.

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minutes) after the first shots rang out inside the Broad Arrow Cafe, before the Police SOG arrived on site. This means Tasmania Police were almost a ‘work-a-day shift’ late! You may consider the ongoing contemptuous behaviour (perhaps even my description is too kind), of their senior officers of what is officially called – now please, no laughing – the *Department of Police and public safety Tasmania*; I kid you not!

These, dare I call them, ‘Constables’, were all drawn from what Deputy Commissioner McCreadie later referred to as his “finest”, the SOG. Of course one must remember Commissioner of Police, John Johnson had become from the outset of this terrorist exercise, almost irrelevant (for reasons that have been already been thoroughly examined, when his deputy Richard McCreadie usurped that role)⁸. All the SOG’s were attired in all-black ‘ninja’ gear of bullet-proof vests, storm-trooper helmets, high-top boots and self-loading, holstered, pistols.⁹ In 2000, it was these same elite SOG’s who came under the glare of the public spotlight and severe criticism during the Mahoney Commission of Inquiry (a report, a third of which remains hidden from the public to this day!), which scrutinised their indiscretions in the shooting death of the Vietnam Veteran, Joseph Gilewicz, in what one Tasmanian journalist explained to me was commonly referred to as a classic example of an ‘assassination that in Tassie we call a white-wash’.

But here as night settled on the Historic Site, these SOG arrived to ‘save the citizens’, each of them with their personal assault weapon and all of its trappings. Herded by these SOG, it was explained to me as being *‘like something out of a Walter Parkes movie’* (perhaps this comparison should be updated to that of a Joel Schumacher or a Christopher Nolan, *‘Batman movie experience’*).¹⁰ Because here more than 31 people surrounded by SOGs or men-in-black, and in the gathering gloom they were herded like sheep from the Clougha cottage along the alleyways and up into the Backpackers’ Hostel for this “debriefing” session.

By about 2030hrs (8:30pm), Management had seen fit to provide the Hostel common room for the purpose of this interrogation. When Wendy Scurr entered the room, the night was dark and the air ‘chilling’ and most of the 31 staff and volunteers, who had been working on the Historic Site that day, were by then seated around the room. Few if any of them had eaten a morsel of food since the first shots rang out at 1323hrs: seven arduous, fear-filled, traumatic hours earlier, and they still didn’t know where the shooter was! On the other hand, the SOG, these men-in-black, could well have been still wiping the residue of tomato sauce and “snags” off their faces; leftovers from their earlier barbecue at Tarrana!

But PAHS Management on the other hand chose to starve their people! No hot drink, no beverage, not even a meat pie or sandwich. Remember too that all the staff and volunteers assembled there were still terrified, traumatised, stressed and fatigued, and suffering the onset of deep shock.

All had been earlier held inside the blacked-out Clougha, where just 2 hours earlier at 1830hrs, 3 loud gunshots rang out close by to the cottage where they sheltered. All were as a result re-traumatized! The three police on site at the time never bothered to mount a search for the culprit and the incident was swallowed up among the overall aftermath *exercise*. Come to think of it, the two female constables who had been flown on-site earlier that day, were themselves, both *unarmed* anyway!

Returning to the Back-Packers Hostel: Chairs had been placed around the room and a ‘large kitchen boiler’ placed on the floor in the centre. This boiler was filled with potable, cold, water. A single

⁸ Refer to the CD-ROM, Deceit & Terrorism, the massacre at Port Arthur.

⁹ Save for the Aus-Cam appareled Constable PAUL HAWKINS No. 1806 – the ‘constable who never was’.

¹⁰ Walter Parkes wrote and directed WarGames (1983), Joel Schumacher, directed the 1995 movies “Batman for Ever”, & 1997, “Batman & Robin”, and Christopher Nolan, wrote and directed the 2012 Batman movie “The Dark Knight Rises”.

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ladle had been generously provided from which all present were expected to sup communally if need be; please keep this scene in mind.

Two people were introduced to the assembly as “counsellors” and shortly after a bus was organised to convey selected witnesses from among the visitors to their segregated overnight accommodation in the empty dormitories of the Police Academy at Rokeby near Hobart.

Though in the Hostel common room, the interrogation commenced, with the 31 staff requested to tell their individual stories of what they saw and knew of the event. All 31 potential witnesses were there together in the same room and so any future statements to Police were contaminated and inadmissible in any future Court action! The indiscretion of conducting a communal interrogation of potential witnesses was even mirrored, by the deplorable actions of Rupert Murdoch’s *Hobart Mercury* which published a full front page altered photograph of the accused, on Tuesday 30th April 1996!

But in the Hostel, the staff sat huddled together in an attempt to comfort and keep each other warm. Some were crying. The assembly was designated as a “staff debriefing”: But Rob Atkins was outside that category. From media video and still shots the author has on file, Mrs. Scurr and another staff member later identified this male as Mr. Rob Atkins. Atkins was also exposed by the investigator and former policeman Andrew MacGregor as a Policeman from NSW, who on the day of the massacre worked there undercover – accompanied by his very pregnant wife Karen.¹¹

As was the case that whenever the opportunity presented itself, Rob Atkins repeatedly mentioned his infamous hearsay claim (he allegedly heard it - second hand), of the blonde-headed gunman allegedly saying, 'he intended to kill some wasps' that day. "*It was as if Atkins needed to coach those present in that room to cultivate the 'wasp' aspect of the event as being fact,*" a witness has told me.

As if management and the counsellors believed these 31 traumatised staff would benefit from '*a slap in the face with a dead fish*,' a large black Labrador dog appeared. Owned by Peter Roach the 'Lab' dawdled over to the kitchen boiler and *lapped to his fill*, then as nonchalantly as it had entered, the dog trotted back out the door and into the night. Staff exchanged looks of astonished outrage; but a realisation was seeping into their subconscious at that moment, that this incident exemplified the low opinion "Authority" had of their worth. This was a *dog act* and it highlighted a madness that ended their day of horror.

With the interrogation session stalled (after an unproductive hour and a half and at around 2130hrs), Mrs. Scurr rose and with several others including Steven Howard, all removed themselves to the bar of the Port Arthur Motel to await Management to announce arrangements made for staff-members to be driven to their homes. For it was at this stage Wendy Scurr was told by Police: "*Do not move your vehicle.*" Yes, Police told these staff members if staff moved their cars, the evidence would be contaminated! This was in spite of the fact the Broad Arrow car-parks had *hours ago*, been almost emptied of visitors' cars and even one of the large buses, not to mention the place had been trampled over by many of the 500 visitors on site that day - for six hours!

The absurdity of police issuing such an order can be understood, if one considers that by that stage, literally hundreds of people had in many cases tramped over the entire 100 acre site, rummaged through their cars and driven away over the roads unchecked. Even the Jetty Road/Tollbooth crime scene had been deliberately corrupted; bodies lying on the carriageway had been deliberately shifted so as to allow a bus to exit via that road. Every person on the Historic Site that day, quite rightly felt abandoned; the “mad circus” of that afternoon only happened as a direct result of the inordinate delay Tasmania Police had deliberately chosen to inflict upon everyone there and every Australian as well, as they themselves barbecued their way through the afternoon near the Tarrana Devils Park.

¹¹ Ref the CD-ROM, Deceit & Terrorism, Andrew MacGregor @ p986

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Though apparently, just minutes before issuing this explicit, silly order directly to Wendy Scurr and her colleagues, it was acceptable practice to have 31 important witnesses all debriefed together? Who'd dare to argue no subtle influences had been dispensed among the assembly by the likes of the under-cover NSW policeman Rob Atkins, upon any future statement from any of these witnesses? It was Rob Atkins remember, who at every opportunity repeated to the media and those who'd listen, his hearsay claim of the gunman saying, "...*there's a lot of wasps around today...*" One is forced to conclude as did most of the 31 staff at that debriefing: The world had suddenly gone very black and quite mad.

Arriving at her home, Wendy Scurr collapsed into bed at about 1.30am on that Monday morning, so fatigued that she starred into the blackness until the sun rose over White Beach...

It was at the time of the Back-Packers Hostel "debriefing", staff members were instructed: 'Do not speak with the media or indeed *with anyone* about the massacre' – but this gag order obviously did not apply to Rob Atkins. As Don Woodland later explained, the authorities established an "enormous wall of silence" around those 31 staff members. They were isolated. Don Woodland insists the effects of the horrors, trauma, smells and the terror were only ever amplified in their minds by that isolation. In some cases I've learned, the debilitating effects of this order alone may well ensure the effects remain with them for life.

Over the first crucial 48 hours, 31 of Port Arthur staff working there on the day received no counselling at all; they were simply abandoned.

After the foregoing facts set down here are considered, witnessed firsthand and recorded by the respected Maj Don Woodland, surely the reader can begin to understand the cavalier, even negligent mind-set that prevailed, among those in authority there. It isn't hard to imagine how easily the PAHSMA's senior executives and board members became a willing party to the conspiracy and cover-up of the nailing-up of the Gift Shop door.

Though of all these matters which simmered on, it was certainly the issue of "the door" which remained uppermost in the minds of most of the 31 staff members and which remains unresolved sixteen years on. The door alone became so contentious, it continued as the focus of wide discussions and actions by the PAHS management and the board. When considered carefully the board's actions that followed were obviously calculated to split the staff into two groups and it straightaway became a 'them' and 'us' situation. Directors, their Managers (not to discount the most likely role of certain politicians), manoeuvred to preserve their careers and ensure staff became suspicious of old and trusted colleagues and to view them even as 'the enemy'.

Special Commissioner Max Doyle in his report exposed the degree to which the PAHS staff who only ever sought answers, were deliberately alienated from their colleagues, and to such an extent that those who questioned the establishment line were subjected to a mental torture, which prompted Mr. Doyle to write with regard to an agreement between certain staff and PAHSMA as follows:

"A copy of the agreement is included to allow the gravity of the situation to be fully understood (Attachment 4). The Commissioner has now contacted Mr. [Steven] Howard and advised him to refer the issue to his solicitors for advice before he contemplated any response to the Authority. Mr. Howard has indicated that he, too, was concerned and amazed at the document and had already placed the matter in the hands of his legal advisers.

"On the copy of the Agreement obtained from the Authority, in Mr. Coombes' own handwriting is a query (at a meeting with Board on May 28, 1997, Mr. Coombes confirmed notes are in his own handwriting):

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"Does this stop him [Steven Howard] from raising other action against us - e.g. the door."
End quote.¹²

By mid May of 1996, about twenty of Mrs. Scurr's colleagues had discussed with her at length, the issues surrounding 'the door'. Many of them were on sick leave, due to the effects of their traumatic, frightening experiences as mentioned by Don Woodland. Though Management's problems were escalating, commensurate to the expanding deterioration in the health of many individuals on the Peninsula, and, especially so as the effects of trauma radiated and manifested among the families of staff there on the day of the massacre. From inside the PAHSMA board (or more probably higher up to the Minister responsible himself), someone decided the brakes had to be applied as the situation began to accelerate out of their control.

Around June of 1996, PAHS management made what now turns out to be, a revealing appointment. Former maintenance carpenter Mr. John Edwards, compromised his position further when he accepted his appointment to the newly created (non-advertised?) position that in no way required any carpentry expertise, when he became the **PAHS Rehabilitation Officer**. It was desirous of Management to reinforce or even legitimise intervention by the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services (CRS), that effectively could neutralise some of the witnesses, and even collaborate with (or more correctly control?), the untrained, non-accredited Rehab Officer - Mr. Edwards - who was tasked to directly counsel these abandoned and traumatised staff, deemed the 'trouble makers'.

The recent revelations have shown this appointment was no less than a convenient attempt to intimidate and/or monitor what these staff members dared to say about "the door" issue during the staff counselling process.

There were three CRS officers I should mention who became involved in the so-called process of "rehabilitation treatment" of people on the Tasman Peninsula, who had suffered the injurious psychological effects of the massacre.

First in the team was a Senior Professional Officer with CRS, Pat McAlpine, though the report she compiled never saw the light of day. Wendy Scurr has told me in among appointments for her first session in the Hobart Clinic, under the care of Dr Paddy Burgess-Watson, it was Pat McAlpine who called and interviewed her at length over her concerns and that during that interview, Ms McAlpine was in tears after hearing the treatment Wendy and her Colleagues had been subjected to by those within Management and the Authorities.

The second counsellor was Ms Sandra Stevens and more on this person shortly.

But it was the third counsellor who figured prominently in those early counselling sessions at the Historic Site, especially with regard to the 'trouble makers' and the issue of 'that door': Ms Natalie Ayres who at that time hailed from Dubbo, and it is the allegations regarding her actions that demonstrate clearly I believe, the lengths to which those in authority were prepared to go, so as to nurture and manipulate their targets – even and including unprofessional and unethical behaviour.

In the case of Natalie Ayers and John Edwards and his wife at the time, allegedly a short but expedient friendship was developed between the three persons. Or, was it that Natalie perhaps harboured a proclivity toward woodwork? At any rate, I have learned that Natalie became so very close to John Edwards and his then wife, that the couple accepted Natalie's invitation to cross Bass Strait and travel all the way north to the central western city of Dubbo in New South Wales, where Natalie celebrated her wedding.

Surely by this stage the reader can appreciate that for those who chose to conceal the issues surrounding the nailing up of "that door" and especially the continued silence of Mr. John Edwards

¹² CD-ROM, Deceit and Terrorism – the massacre at Port Arthur, file The Doyle Report p.860

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(and perhaps his then wife?), this silence has always been and still is crucial in the whole of the massacre event. If Edwards or indeed his then wife chose to tell the wrong person about the nailing-up of the door, it would have been, *game over* from that time for those a party to the cover-up!

Once this fact is understood, then the role of those in authority to control the people they identified as 'trouble makers', can also be better appreciated. Management's 'control' extended to certain 'targets' by suggesting that anyone labelled by them as "trouble makers" were 'not to be trusted' and at all times shunned. I have been told by several reliable informants, that the situation was so very clear that when formerly good friends met while shopping, those intimidated in this manner would, nervously, try to end the meeting and conversation as quickly as possible, while nervously looking about to see if prying eyes had witnessed them '*consorting*'. One victim of this intimidation even told me long ago: *"Now I know how East Germans must have felt after the Russians took over."*

Equally, such intimidation required loyal 'controllers'. Was in fact Natalie Ayers, tasked with 'keeping tabs' on John Edwards and his then wife?

At the Historic Site, counsellor Sandra Stevens sat in with the 'chippy-come-counsellor' John Edwards during his early sessions when he "counselled" individual staff-members who were still on sick leave. Remember, these were people labelled by Management as the "trouble makers" but as PAHS staff-members, they too were covered by Tasmania's Workers' Compensation scheme.

If this terrorist attack was planned, and indeed when all the evidence is considered carefully, that is exactly what is revealed, then this next change must have been achieved in the 'planning stage'. For in a deception matched only by the entire tragedy *cover-up conspiracy*, as if we mere mortals should not believe them as psychic, the Government of Tasmania had, just 5 months prior to the massacre, and in November of 1995, removed from their State's Workers' Compensation Act the claimable injury called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Described as an anxiety disorder, PTSD commonly manifests in an individual who has been exposed to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical injury occurred or was observed or witnessed as having occurred firsthand — such as a shooting massacre. The sufferer can experience persistent, frightening thoughts and memories of their ordeal or that suffered by loved ones or friends etc, amplified by feelings of emotional numbness toward loved-ones and friends and to then sink into deep depression. Invariably, sufferers experience sleep disorders, are easily startled, and, in the more severe cases the condition produces thoughts of self-harm or actual self-harm. Since the 1970s, PTSD has been shown as a most common disorder resulting from people's involvement in 'major disasters'.

So, an obvious question begs an answer here:

What information came to hand shortly before November 1995 to convince the newly appointed Attorney General, and Minister for Tourism etc — the Hon Ray Groom — to deem it appropriate and useful for the Tasmania Government to immediately remove the anxiety disorder, PTSD from Tasmania Workers' Compensation Act?

This question to Mr. Groom is made all the more appropriate, seeing as how PTSD only manifests in people as a delayed response to having witnessed or experienced a traumatic event such as occurred just 5 months later at Port Arthur. Did Groom know something Tasmanians in general didn't know?

To explain fully the twists and turns of the insurance facet of the tragedy, I feel is outside the parameters of this article, save to say, it would be remiss of me not to address some of the more pertinent points the insurance segment raises.

We must keep uppermost in our mind that the PAHS enterprise was owned and operated by the State Government of Tasmania; **the Historic Site was and remains a commercial enterprise.**

When the massacre occurred in April of 1996, MMI Insurance was the underwriter for Tasmania State Government's liabilities for Workers' Compensation and catastrophic events. Although by example,

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the Members of the Tasmania Legislative Council, engaged in almost overt meddling in the overall process of claims, so much so, that a reliable witness Graeme Scurr who was heavily involved in claims lodged by staff recently insisted, "**MMI was really no more than an insurance facilitator**".

Another important point also should be made here: As the employer, the Tasmania Government had a primary obligation to all taxpayers of the State, over and above those of any claimant (whether a victim or a survivor). This is not a cop-out on the part of the author, but a sad legal reality which has surfaced on many occasions involving disasters over the years where the "State" was the employer of the claimant; a case in point is the sinking of HMAS Voyager 45 years ago off Jervis Bay. So the "State's" primary obligation is to limit claims as much as is legally attainable.

A report published in 2000 by the State Government of Tasmania confirms that, *"in order to protect the [workers compensation] Scheme from claim costs associated with a single catastrophic event, reinsurance is purchased annually by the Scheme."* End quote.

In this instance, the entity termed "**the Scheme**" can be decoded to read as yet another "Government controlled bureaucracy". At the time of the Port Arthur tragedy, the State's catastrophe policy was held with MMI and provided for unlimited cover with an excess of UAD\$1 million. In other words, 'the Scheme' had to meet the first AUD\$1 million in total claims' costs arising from the massacre with all subsequent costs arising being payable by the insurer.

Though it wasn't too long before Historic Site staff claimants, already frustrated by the process, found they were dealing with new faces and a new insurance company. For during 1998 the Tasmania Government changed insurance "horses": MMI was replaced by HIH Winterthur whom the Minister had selected would provide catastrophe insurance cover for "the Scheme". The ongoing humbug of a recalcitrant employer (PAHS Management and/or Government) and earlier hog-tied MMI staff, only worsened as time went by.

In relation to the catastrophe of Port Arthur, the Government's report further exposes, claims on "the Scheme" had exceeded the \$1million excess and as a consequence, *"a method [was] devised [to share this cost] among agencies ... participating in the Scheme"*. I would presume these "agencies" would have included Tasmania Police, Tasmania Ambulance Service and the State's SES for instance.

By the year 2000, it was still claimed as impossible for the Tasmania Government to accurately predict the total cost of claims arising from out of the Port Arthur massacre.

Their 1998-99 Report states: *"The eventual total cost [of Port Arthur claims] will not be known for a number of years. The vast majority of claims costs are likely to arise from claims made for stress-related conditions,"* bearing in mind, late 1995, PTSD had been legislated as an 'illegitimate claim'. By June 30, 1999, there had been a total of 82 claims lodged against Tasmanian State Service Workers' Compensation Scheme (TSSWCS) in respect of the Port Arthur tragedy.

"At 30 June 1999, the estimated total cost of these claims was \$6.781 million and the amount paid on those claims was \$4.441 million, with outstanding case estimates of \$2.340 million". One claim I know of which remains outstanding may never be settled, as mainland lawyers are for some, prevented from working in Tasmania, a position this claimant has thrown in his face, every time successive mainland lawyers consider his case and recommend it be prosecuted vigorously!

Save for the odd exception, such as Brigid Cook and Lynne Beavis for example, many claimants are still doing it tough mentally and monetarily across the country. Some have lost their homes, while others have lost family members to Port Arthur massacre related suicides!

Employed as a cook in the Broad Arrow Cafe that day, Ms Brigid Cook was the sixth admission to Royal Hobart Hospital, as a category 2 patient, taken by road ambulance, suffering bullet wounds to both thighs. On the other hand Lynne Beavis suffered no such physical injuries whatsoever; Lynne had for *no good reason* entered the Broad Arrow Cafe after the shooting, in spite of the media

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repeatedly spreading the lie of her having been trained "nurse" and as '*assisting the injured*'. Lynne Beavis did not provide assistance to any wounded person that day. But of claimants suffering mentally, 16 of the original 82 claimants were eventually 'denied cover' by Allianz Insurance, appointed in 2001 as the reinsurer and responsible for reimbursing the Tasmanian Risk Management Fund to the amount of \$6.2m in claim costs that year.¹³

In spite of her signed Police statement to the contrary, Lynne Beavis was working when she and her sister Jean were on the Historic Site on the day of the massacre. Lynne Beavis was supposedly employed by the Commonwealth Bank!? Her work status on the day is supported by the outcome of a liable claim Beavis successfully prosecuted, before the bench in the Melbourne County Court, during August of 2004, where she was awarded an undisclosed "*six figure workers compensation settlement*," directly related to alleged trauma she claimed to have suffered there that day, and paid out by the Commonwealth. Interestingly, her claim case uncovered two employers (?), the other being Audiometrics & Medical Personnel Pty Ltd, of 814 Glenferrie Road in the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn. I'm caused to wonder what Lynne's job description was at the "Witch Bank"? ¹⁴

Do you remember the Insurance giant HIH? Well here HIH rejoins the aftermath story. Before Allianz, HIH was Tasmania's catastrophe insurer. But shortly this corporation had to deal with its corporate liability called 'staying afloat'! For on 15 March 2001, HIH's corporate cosmos caved in and the company was forced into provisional liquidation. The then Federal Treasurer, Peter Costello at the time of the collapse of HIH (involving HIH Winterthur and FAI Insurance), described the failure as, "*one of the largest collapses in Australian [corporate] history*."

But in this instance, the Federal (Howard) Government *rushed* to assemble a "bail out" scheme for HIH investors to the tune of \$400 million: A stunning example of the gross hypocrisy and discrimination, on a scale never before seen in this country, when one harkens back to Howard's recalcitrant demeanour displayed on National Television that saw the Coroners Act of Tasmania ignored and those affected by the massacre at Port Arthur treated like outcasts! For no such scheme to assist the traumatised survivors of the Port Arthur tragedy was ever contemplated by Howard and his cronies or their mates in the Tasmania Government!

As well, the Federal Government authorised expenditure of in excess of a further \$42 million on incidentals, including a not insignificant amount to fund the newly appointed Federal DPP, Damien Bugg QC (formerly the Tasmania DPP and so deeply entwined with the aftermath tragedy and the "inoperable Gift Shop door" cover-up), so as he could prosecute Rodney Adler and Ray Williams, both executives with the collapsed HIH, and just like the Historic Site, a 'commercial enterprise' incidentally.

Early in 2005, after criminal charges were proven, Rodney Adler was sentenced to a term of four and a half years gaol, with two and a half years, non-parole. Ray Williams pleaded guilty to three criminal charges, and was sentenced to four years gaol on 15 April 2005. Accusations by players in these goings-on flew about like bullets between Adler, Williams, Fodera and directors, Lachlan Murdoch and James Packer. The whole affair produced some pretty fancy footwork between them all, on the other hand, Historic Site executives handling their mess had only soiled a pair of "kid-gloves"!

As the after effects of the Port Arthur tragedy engulfed the Tasman Peninsula community, a group of concerned citizens there convened various public meetings. Graeme Scurr and Peter Tomlinson attended one such gathering and from the floor asked questions in an attempt to clarify the cause of the "logjam" that hindered many of the insurance claims settlements. This prompted a Queensland

¹³ Refer TRMF Reports @ <http://www.tenders.tas.gov.au> various up to 2001-2.

¹⁴ Refer CD-ROM Deceit & Terrorism, "A Gunsmith's Notebook etc", Chapter 26, p. 280.

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based psychologist who'd been closely involved earlier in a Queensland mine disaster, to volunteer, that it was his personal experience the situation regarding such insurance matters as the Port Arthur tragedy, mirrored exactly that which he'd witnessed to have occurred during the aftermath the earlier Queensland mine collapse. In that case, Graeme Scurr explained to the author that the gentleman stated that the '*interests of the insurance company were sacrosanct*'. In his experience such recovery processes were in his estimation, '*most definitely insurance driven*'.

But for reasons dealt with on the CD-ROM, *Deceit & Terrorism – the massacre at Port Arthur*, the Commonwealth was not only closely involved in the whole exercise, but amidst its cloistered halls of power, individuals showed a special interest in the catastrophe compensation claims process.

Early in the post massacre period, staff who were then receiving sick leave benefits, were summoned by phone to attend counselling sessions that were held in venues on the PAHS, in one of the cottages (like Clougha). From the first session, Wendy Scurr noticed immediately, Sandra Stevens the female counsellor mentioned earlier, exhibited a most unpleasant and uncaring attitude. Remember, Mrs. Scurr was a St John's trained First Aid Instructor who had also nursed, and served as a volunteer ambulance officer on the Peninsula.

Wendy has told me that during her first session, every statement she made was 'parroted' by John Edwards – the carpenter-come-counsellor. Edward's presence, his unprofessional attitude and demeanour, ensured those sessions to be a most distressing and a harmful influence added to Wendy's exposure to the most stressful and fear-filled 12 hours of her life. All the while Ms Stevens failed to contribute in any positive way or intervene in what obviously would have been for Mrs. Scurr, a most humiliating, frustrating, unhelpful process. As I understand it, this deplorable situation was repeated during the "counselling sessions" many of Mrs. Scurr's colleagues were also forced to attend.

However, for Mrs. Scurr (and surely some at least of the 31 other staff I mentioned earlier), the situation only ever deteriorated. For shortly after the first counselling session, a staff member repeated to Wendy, a good deal of the statements Wendy had earlier made in the strictest confidence in the presence of Ms Sandra Stevens and Mr. John Edwards. Wendy explained that, "*this [revelation] shattered me.*" Not only did she still feel abandoned, but now it was demonstrated that Wendy Scurr had been betrayed! "*I was fuming,*" Mrs. Scurr told me.

Wendy Scurr was so outraged, she vowed '*never to again trust these counsellors*,' and so she ceased attending any more of what she believed were nothing less than, '*interrogation sessions*'. If that experience wasn't enough, then a phone call resulted in more pressure being applied, amplified by alleged bullying on the part of by Mr. John Edwards who threatened, "***If you don't attend the counselling sessions at Port Arthur, he told me, 'you won't receive any further wages at all***," Mrs. Scurr explained recently.

With this direct threat hanging over her head, Wendy felt she had no choice other than to recant and attend, but she decided firmly not to respond to any of their 'mind games' tactics. When attending the next session, and upon entering the room, Mrs. Scurr simply sat down and remained mute.

After much one-sided conversation and in response to increasing, aggressive, questioning and veiled threats, Wendy expressed her contempt as she explained recently: "*I told them both what they could do with their counselling sessions in no uncertain terms and that I'd find my own doctor.*" At this juncture Wendy's action at least neutralised these rehab officers' inappropriate control over her.

Without delay, Mrs. Scurr sought out the Hobart psychologist, Dr Braganza and repeated to him the threats and unprofessional behaviour by John Edwards and Sandra Stevens. "*Dr Braganza reported what had happened to me, to a Hobart based psychiatrist,*" Wendy told me.

But the carpenter-turned-counsellor John Edwards, accompanied by his colleague Ms Sandra Stevens were not dissuaded by Wendy Scurr's rebuff, as the pair even exhibited their gall by visiting Dr Braganza! This unethical intervention, so outraged this doctor, he contacted Wendy to reassure her he

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had '*told them absolutely nothing*' and that he, '*would never ever breach Wendy's doctor/patient confidentiality*'. Shortly after this development, Dr Paddy Burges-Watson (also based in Hobart), was consulted by Mrs. Scurr and became her treating doctor, and shortly he advised Wendy to be admitted without delay to Hobart Clinic for intense, life-saving treatment.

After Dr. Burgess-Watsons' untimely road accident – a controversial event in itself ¹⁵ - Mrs. Scurr sought treatment on the mainland under Dr Paul Brown.

The Senior Professional CRS Officer, Pat McAlpine, was actually the first counsellor of note to appear – post the tragedy, and she authored the first report (unpublished) of her initial findings as to the mental health of Peninsula people affected by the massacre as mentioned in the Doyle Report.

Regarding studies: Without respite and certainly until very recent times at least, the health records of people residing on the Tasman Peninsula were *studied* surreptitiously, by mental health academics in regard to the lingering after effects of the massacre. I just wonder though for what purpose? I doubt if locals are even aware today that they still arouse such "State" interest.

On 1 December 1996, and in response to a second (phoned) request by Ray Groom, Maj Don Woodland flew out of Sydney direct to Hobart and for a second time was off to the Tasman Peninsula. Collecting a rental car arranged for by Daryl Williams, the Commonwealth Attorney General, Don Woodland drove straight to pre-arranged motel accommodation at Nubeena west of Port Arthur. Here is confirmation yet again of a deep interest in the counselling process by the Commonwealth Government.

Don Woodland was so disturbed by what he found this time, he was caused to write, albeit a short, but frank report of his findings and conclusions after his first hand contact and interviews with the traumatised staff of the Historic Site. This was the second report – also never published. Although in this instance and before he flying out of Hobart, Don Woodland personally put his Report directly into the hands of the Attorney General for Tasmania, the Hon Ray Groom.

Along with the report authored by Pat McAlpine, the disturbing nature of the claims made in both these documents, jolted the State Government into action and directly as a result, the earlier-formed '*top level, joint-party parliamentary committee*' decided to *arrest* the volatile situation, rather than *defuse* it. Individual by individual their outrage and concerns could be neutralised – so as the politicians could save their miserable hides should an outraged public be alerted to the situation.

This author is not exaggerating here, as unlike those victims at that time, I fortunately have the benefit of hindsight as I write.

At the time of appointing Max Doyle as a Special Commissioner, obviously, the Hobart based political masters were acutely aware, *the natives were very restless* and if they were not consoled immediately, a show down was imminent between the aggrieved claimants and the Government. So in this highly charged atmosphere with emotions at breaking point among PAHS staff and their families, the first official inquiry was brought on by order of this '*top-level, joint-party parliamentary committee*'. It was this committee which appointed Mr. Max Doyle as Special Commissioner into matters affecting the Port Arthur Historic Site and Associated Matters.

Hope springs eternal...

Without delay, John Edwards was first of staff *conserved* by management, when they extracted him from out of the sawdust, shavings and nails, to change his job description and install him into the

¹⁵ Dr Paddy Burges-Watson may well have been seen by some at highest level and in public office among conspirators of the Port Arthur massacre, as a threat, because of his role in the highly controversial Royal Commission of Inquiry into the police shooting of Joe Gilewicz; ref. CD - "Deceit & Terrorism", article: "Template for Terrorism", pp.32-33.

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quite unrelated position as the Historic Site's "**Grief Counsellor**". However, all of this manoeuvring by Management (and their Masters too) was about to come under the scrutiny of Mr. Max Doyle.

Faced with and unsure outcome of Max Doyle's enquiries, either Mr. Edwards, Management or perhaps even a faceless person further up the political "food-chain", undertook further breathtaking manoeuvring, when Mr. Edwards took a sudden sea-change! However, if this change in employment came about, in the form of an offer Mr. Edwards found difficult to refuse, then it must be said, such a change must have put enormous pressure on his family situation. For Risdon Prison is at least an hour and 20 minutes away from Nubeena (106km over a very demanding route), and commuting there for shift work would soon prove testing on any marriage, I would contend.

This move though does seem to confirm an enthusiastic confidence by some as to John Edwards' multi skilled resume. In just months Edwards had been described as the onsite Maintenance Carpenter, then PAHS Grief Counsellor and now he was a correctional officer (or warden) in HM Risdon Prison, but definitely geographically at least, an hour or so away from the site of "that Door" and perhaps the direct awkward, questioning from Special Commissioner Max Doyle!

Mr. Max Doyle had earlier been employed by the Tasmania Government as a 'trouble shooter' to sort out various problems and in that role he'd gained unqualified respect from the whole community. Various individuals touched by the Port Arthur tragedy have described Max Doyle to me simply as a "good man". After he delivered his report in 1997, Mr. Doyle retired from public life, but not without the lingering effect of that trying experience.

Unfortunately we are unable to consider the original findings made in the Doyle Report that he had finalised as scheduled for release by the end of May of 1997. But as June began, someone had tipped-off the local media that any further delay was down to Mr. Groom and his cronies, as Mr. Doyle had been forced to return more than a few times to re-submit *edited versions* of his report for perusal by the pedantic, faceless people of the '*top-level, joint-party parliamentary committee*'.

Mr. Doyle's honest findings were obviously getting in the way of someone's agenda! For the outcome jealously sought by Mr. Groom, could only be attainable by political expedience, interference and skulduggery!

The empathy exemplified throughout even the 'purged form' of the Doyle Report puts to rest any doubt of the high principles of the Special Commissioner. As any hint of compromise in his final draft, surely resulted only from the censors' scissors, wielded by the political "High Priest" of Port Arthur, the State's Attorney General, who in the months leading up to the massacre had drawn to his bosom a gaggle of ministerial titles that enveloped everything to do with Port Arthur.

By the end, I believe Mr. Doyle could have walked the path to the censors' den — blindfolded, as Mr. Doyle had submitted many drafts of those findings. The Mercury headline bluntly declared his findings were indeed:

"TOO HOT TO HANDLE - The long awaited Doyle Report into the turmoil at Port Arthur was still being kept under wraps last night – and it may never be publicly released."

Unquestionably, there was considerable political interference; Max Doyle had been *advised* – we know not how many times – and even at the eleventh hour, to moderate his findings. But one question remains unanswered: "How do you moderate truthful conclusions?"

A host of crucial concerns though remained in print among the 100-plus pages of Mr. Doyle's Report that effectively escaped the censor's cut. Just like the later Mahoney Commission of Inquiry into the death of Joseph Gilewicz (Tas. Feb 2000), even the sanitised version of Mr. Doyle's Report, was only

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ever treated with contempt by Tasmanian politicians for they *immediately* commissioned yet a further report from Damien Bugg QC to blatantly apply yet another veneer of their own half-truths so as to white-wash to '*the writing on the wall*'.

However, we need to consider a disgusting incident involving PAHS's CEO Craig Coombes at this point: During the period in which Management struggled to reopen the Historic Site to visitors Coombes played a direct role. The Management decided to transport onto the Site, a temporary cafe. While this building was large enough to include a servery, it was too small to include a kitchen. So in their wisdom, Management overcame this problem by expedience, instructing the young, female, staff replacements, to re-open the kitchen within the Broad Arrow Cafe!

These young female employees, were expected to ignore the bullet holes, shrapnel damage, then to clean away the blood and body parts near the 'bain-marie' so as to accommodate *the preparation of fresh food for visitors*, and, when prepared, to carry this food on trays across to the temporary, transportable, cafe, as customers required.

Special Commissioner Doyle within his Report, and using the most unflattering language, made strident criticism of all associated with enforcing this decision. One submission Mr. Doyle received read:

"Those girls should never have been sent back to the Broad Arrow Cafe - they became stressed - some had to stay for up to two hours per day in that awful area. When the girls got a break they went behind the buildings and cried."

When these young ladies, were observed crying outside the kitchen door and refusing to re-enter the old kitchen, as I understand it, Craig Coombes allegedly directly intervened, threatening them with dismissal if they refused to cook in the Broad Arrow Cafe kitchen. Later the Doyle report states, Craig Coombes even arranged that the Food and Beverage girls be forced to sign a release, stating that '*they went into the Broad Arrow Cafe at their own risk.*' When I read this for the first time, I was flabbergasted and appalled.

The Commissioner sought comment about this deplorable event from the CEO Mr. Coombes who claimed that while he was aware the girls were using the area, he refused to comment further. It was at this point during this whole sordid affair, we are told that Mr. Coombes, "*went to Perth or Adelaide for a holiday.*" How nice.

The Television Interview: A pathway to the sole

As each anomaly came into the public domain, correspondingly the controversy mounted. ABC-TV **7.30Report** program revisited "the door" on the evening of 18th February 1997 – before the release of the Doyle Report. When the producers put to air an interview with three survivors of the massacre who raised grave allegations regarding those who died in the Gift Shop and alleged a direct link of those deaths to 'that door', some in the State's political "Royal Family" became – quite nervous.

Awaiting his own turn to be interviewed for the next news item and watching off-camera was none other than the Hon Ray Groom, Attorney General of Tasmania. When his turn came to front the cameras, he could not conceal his anger exhibited by the images and words he uttered and they remain as irrefutable witness of his anger and palpable fear of exposure¹⁶ when Groom stated:

"Cause of the murders was not a door. The cause of the murders was Martin Bryant firing lethal weapons at people in a very short space of time, a matter of seconds, and murdering twenty people in the Broad Arrow Cafe and fifteen elsewhere, and of course

¹⁶ Can be viewed on CD-ROM, Deceit & Terrorism.

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wounding many people. I don't believe that that door issue is a principle factor in the matter." End quote

But with Mr. Groom's intimacy to every aspect of the massacre, I would allege before and after the fact, this short session on ABC-TV did I believe destroy any credibility as a politician he had ever enjoyed. To those who have studied the tragic events of Port Arthur that autumn of 1996, they know full well, his statements are at best misleading or worse, they are simply unashamed lies.

With the release of the Doyle Report imminent and almost surely its content having been considered several times earlier by the same Attorney General, news of what the draft copy exposed may well have filtered through to some of the PAHSMA directors, who realised their positions were untenable.

Even in its altered form, Doyle pointed up 8 matters requiring immediate, serious attention by PAHS Board, apart from the unresolved issues of 'that door'. One disturbing item mentioned was that of a writ filed on February 17, 1997, for Rhonda Tomlinson (the PAHSMA "book-keeper"), in which among other serious allegations the writ alleged "breach of trust" as well as "deceitful conduct" by Management. Again this was just before release of the Doyle Report, and so it would appear, in an attempt to avoid at least public censure or possible prosecution, PAHSA chairman Michael Mazengarb, board member Geoff Stump and the CEO Craig Coombs, all resigned in disgrace.

Edited, altered and censored the Doyle Report may be, but, there is a saving grace: Max Doyle's Report at the very least retained some of the survivors' gravest concerns written into his findings and obviously upon his insistence these important matters avoided the *censor's cuts* and so his findings also remain on the public record.

To compile his report, Mr. Doyle conducted 353 personal interviews, took 28 telephone submissions, attended 5 Public meetings and corresponded with people on 98 occasions. In conclusion Mr. Doyle made 21 sober recommendations, some of which were even put into effect. But arguably the most disturbing issue of the Gift Shop door was left *unresolved* in the final document. Max Doyle recommended a further inquiry having wider powers be instituted. Twisting Mr. Doyle's conclusions, the politicians choreographed a repulsive response of one-act theatre: Damien Bugg QC, produced, directed and played the lead role, and even took a bow; a report that reported on a report. But the 'patrons' were not amused, and there was no applause for Bugg's "Oscar" performance!

With Max Doyle ensuring many of the controversies remained on the public record, an energetic attempt was mounted by Mr. Bugg to blur the facts concerning everything connected with the deaths which occurred in Gift Shop near that "Fire Exit" door, and so put the stamp of *orthodoxy* upon the "Bugg Report", perhaps seen as palatable only to an uninformed public, chasing after the latest fad.

Politicians' Promises: Easy to make, easy to break

As the tenth anniversary approached, the massacre survivor Ms Carolyn Laughton was the subject of a substantial article published in *The Age* newspaper. Ms Laughton's contribution was explicit. Over an extended period commencing with her evacuation to the Royal Hobart Hospital after the massacre, Ms Laughton underwent no less than 30 major surgery sessions in 7 different hospitals. From personal experience, I can attest to patients recovering major *elective* surgery (in NSW at least), they can benefit from access to affordable, very adequate and professional post-operative support in their home. Though *The Age* article demonstrates the reality for the surviving victims of Port Arthur, there was definitely yet another set of standards in place as attested to by Carolyn Laughton:

'For one six-month period, where she could not walk properly following surgery involving pins, she crawled out of bed every morning, crawled into the base of her shower to wash and then crawled into her lounge room where she lay on a couch for the rest of the day,' Karen Kissane reported. Though it

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is not explained how the patient dried herself and conducted other, necessary, ablutions or even prepared her own meals. I found Ms Laughton's description of her situation simply disgusting.

In the course of her interview, Carolyn Laughton explained further:

"I do feel a great injustice has been done to a lot of people by the lack of care after the event." She continued: *"...people don't realise how problematic [rehabilitation] is. There are very real needs out there."* Obviously like so many, Carolyn was also simply abandoned.

At that time, Carolyn Laughton was aware the Doyle Report had found, that the governments' "financial aid" offered to the survivors, was entirely deficient, and to such an extent, the deal offered, failed to even meet the survivors' medical and legal costs incurred. My fellow countrymen should be totally outraged by the fact, current illegal immigrants some call "boat-people" receive so much more pampering, when our Australians who survived the massacre at Port Arthur, even severely injured, have been forced to "eat cake"!

The \$3.5m subscribed by the public and a further \$1.3m derived from the controversial seizure of Martin Bryant's assets, was all supposedly divided between 300 victims. But you do the sums yourself, they don't add up! I can say with surety, some of the victims never ever received anything approaching a fair entitlement of those funds, let alone any monies from the victims-of-crime scheme, public risk insurance or workers' compensation.

Carolyn Laughton is further quoted as explaining Mr. Doyle's finding this way:

"Doyle summed it up. It's not money (you need), it's services. I thought I would have received a letter saying: 'What services do you need?' Have [Commissioner Doyle's] recommendations been implemented? And if not, why not?"

To the credit of journalist and author Karen Kissane, these questions were afterwards put to the office of the then Tasmania Premier, Paul Lennon, whose spokesman Rod Wallis was reported to have pathetically responded by e-mail, writing:

"There are still a great many raw feelings related to Port Arthur. For that reason, we will decline your invitation to contribute to your article." And their silence is deafening.

It matters little what political party occupy the treasury benches: By 2006 the ALP had replaced the Liberals and still the faceless "government" was terrified but determined that the extent of the administration's "liability" should never be exposed to the gaze of survivors of that tragedy and whose outrage smoulders on.

Of the male who shot and killed her daughter and wounded Carolyn so very badly, she was reported as stating: *"I could have touched him, he was so close. He had the gun up and was shooting people behind me. Then he goes up to the other end of the cafe, and then he came back past us — I maintain because of the locked exit door — and then he saw her and he saw me. When you throw yourself on top of someone you don't cover their head."*¹⁷

Earlier to the article published by *The Age*, and on 2nd September 2000, along with 8 other survivors and two of their spouses, Carolyn Laughton was a party to a very important teleconference conducted by the then Senator (Qld) Len Harris. During that teleconference the matter of the Gift Shop "Fire Exit" door figured prominently in the lengthy submissions taken by the Senator. Of course, the Senator made some interesting promises and then as easily as they were made, but for reasons he has never divulged, he broke them. Importantly though, all of the submissions, promises and statements have been transcribed and remain on record.

¹⁷ Theage.com.au A daughter gone, a life in ruins, 1apr06

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In that transcript, the subject of “that door” was first raised at page 4 (of 48 pages) by Colin Cooper, who expressed his “concern”. Colin is the spouse of Robyn Cooper, PAHS’s Manager for Visitor Services in April 1996, and so Wendy Scurr’s supervisor. Colin’s submission drew an immediate response from a female who would not have known Colin by his voice, and who also failed to identify herself at that instance. Later her voice is easily identified as none other than that of Ms Lynne Beavis of Melbourne. For much of Ms Laughton’s early recovery and at every social event she attended, photographic evidence shows Ms Beavis was her constant companion. But on this occasion, Beavis and Ms Laughton were separated by as much as a thousand kilometres. At her interjection in the teleconference, Beavis insisted on “...*an introduction of where the people are actually, who they are and where they fit into the picture?* Is that alright,” she prompted the Senator.

Shortly Jenny Moors (of South Australia) joined in and we should consider her submission closely:

Jenny Moors: ...there’s not much that I want to say but I was by the door which was locked. Had it been able to open, it would have been a different scenario; I would have been out of it. I had, maybe let’s say it was about two minutes and it was over, it seemed like an eternity but I know that we would have been out of there through that door.

Senator Harris: So if the door had of been able to open, yourself and an unknown other amount of people...

Jenny Moors: Those people...

Senator Harris: Would have got through...

Jenny Moors: ...would have got through...And, when Damien Bugg rung, had phoned me one weekend for me to – he was doing a report about it — and I made comment and it’s in the report, that ‘they didn’t have a chance,’ meaning...” (Interrupted and over-talked by Lynne Beavis who re-joined the teleconference).

Jenny Moors: Okay, it was just when Damien Bugg had [made] a report that said we “didn’t have a chance”: I meant that the one man who was shot across the counter didn’t have a chance then. That we had actually waited towards the end before those at the door were shot and he [Damien Bugg] cut me off straight away and took down what he wanted to and didn’t give me a chance to say, ‘*Look, if the door had opened those people who were right at the door and were shot [dead] would have been out.*’ So I feel angry over that. But because I was so traumatised I put it to the back of mind and let it go.

Senator Harris: So he, he clearly (break)

Jenny Moors: ...those people at the door who were still standing there while he [the gunman], went back into the Cafe shooting, so that when he came back and shot down towards the door then there was a different scenario then, and I’m saying those people standing at the door, had it opened they would have got out and I would have been out of that door too instead of being in a cupboard. *End extract.*

Importantly though, the above exchange between the teleconference facilitator Senator Harris and witness Jenny Moors exposes yet another critical flaw in Bugg’s synopsis and confirms an agenda that did not include the truth of the matter. Bugg’s hidden agenda saw him fabricate evidence presented as “fact” and in this case, pertinent to his summary of the *shortened duration of the shooting* inside the Broad Arrow Cafe.

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In presenting his synopsis to the Court during the sentencing hearing of Martin Bryant, Mr. Bugg insisted there were just 29 shots fired inside the Broad Arrow Cafe in 90 seconds.

On the CD-ROM *Deceit & Terrorism – the Port Arthur massacre*, and at Chapter 4 (pp.62-63) of *A Gunsmith's Notebook*, the reader can consider points either ignored or buried when the Mr. Bugg was 'stating facts,' that are exposed by our straightforward investigation which destroy Bugg's fabricated 29 shots in 90 seconds scenario.

Mr. Bugg's lowering of the number of shots fired inside the Cafe was crucial support for his argument. Crucial in also supporting his flawed synopsis of the duration of the shooting inside the Cafe and crucial for supporting the sole shooter argument: these are deceits, and nothing less than padding to allow Damien Bugg to promote *the hidden agenda*.

I'm able to confidently state the number of shots and the duration of them far exceeds Bugg's theories of shootings inside the Cafe, he stated as fact during the sentencing hearing.

The findings published by former Victoria Policeman, Andrew MacGregor and this author, on segments of the shootings are not theory: These findings were carefully established and are provable fact, and, our findings are further corroborated by the above submission by Jenny Moors, a support not able to be considered at the time our work was published on CD-ROM.

In her submission, Jenny clearly indicates the male who was standing on the 'other side of the counter' in the Gift Shop from her (and so, further away from where Jenny Moors was concealed near the "Fire Exit" door), was shot by a gunman on the first of two entrances into the Gift Shop area from the Dining Room, not one visit into the Gift Shop as Bugg claims!

Jenny Moors goes on to explain it was not until his *next or second visit* of a shooter entering the Gift Shop area that those people trapped inside and near to the "Fire Exit" door were shot and killed.

After a thorough investigation I can categorically state the claim made by Damien Bugg of '*a total of just 29 shots*' being fired inside the Cafe and the shooter only entering the Gift Shop area once, cannot be sustained. There were at least in fact between 41 and 45 shots fired from a .223"AR15 SP-1 self-loading rifle alone. But how many further shots were fired (and by whom) from a .308" calibre firearm, and then there were 12ga shotgun shells discharged also in the cafe!

Mr. Bugg's theories do not include any shots fired from a smooth-bore shotgun or a .308" calibre weapon as evidenced within official forensic documents he obviously ignored! The above submission by Jenny Moors destroys Mr. Bugg's synopsis thoroughly, and at the same time demonstrates Damien Bugg QC was working to a hidden agenda that conflicts directly with seeking the truth by "stating facts". And remember, Bugg's so-called "facts" were never tested under cross examination, or stated under oath. And, it must also be remembered: this railroading of the truth was accomplished long before that most reprehensible Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Legislation Amendment (the Terrorism) Bill was passed into law in 2004. As Jenny Moors points out: when 'stating facts', Damien Bugg deliberately chose to misrepresent Ms Moors' statement, which she freely and willingly provided to Mr. Bugg by telephone.

The Bugg Synopsis has one gunman shooting and moving from the dining room into the Gift Shop area ONCE only. Jenny Moors (among other witness statements) indicate a shooter entered the Gift Shop area TWICE.

The old adage says, '*the lie requires a legion of guardians*'...

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The System was Bugged

In late June 1997, the Joint Parliamentary Group, commissioned Mr. Damien Bugg QC to inquire into, **"The facts and Circumstances Whereby the Doorway at the South Eastern Front of the Broad Arrow Cafe Could Not Be Opened On Sunday the 28th April 1996."**

This inquiry was only commissioned because Mr Doyle's efforts were thwarted. But! Why did Mr. Bugg accede to this "request"? For I believe it could be successfully argued Mr. Bugg had a conflict of interests from the outset. You see, Damien Bugg QC, had earlier on the 19th of November 1996, made his *conclusions* associated with related issues surrounding the inoperative Gift Shop fire escape door, to the Supreme Court in Hobart, Tasmania, during the Sentencing Hearing of Martin Bryant.

Even using previously unheard evidence, Damian Bugg QC could hardly make findings in June of 1997 that would be in conflict with his own statements before Cox CJ, the Judge presiding over Martin Bryant's Sentencing Hearing of November of 1996! Now could he?

Anyway, upon checking with the Special Commissioner Doyle, Bugg found that now, as many as 20 proponents had made submissions drawing attention to the inoperative state of the Gift Shop door, eighteen of whom initially agreed to speak collectively to Bugg. Although when it came time to do so, for reasons not so difficult to imagine, Bugg had changed his mind...

Under the subheading in his report, *"Did the Door Malfunction or Not Open on the 28th April 1996?"*, Bugg submits that on Tuesday 30.04.96, a "carpenter employed by the Authority" was instructed paint out all the windows and nail-up all but one door the disabled persons entrance in the Broad Arrow Cafe for an almost implausible reason, and Mr. Bugg goes on to state:

"At the time this was done the person concerned, who had heard of the suggestion that the door had not opened, checked the lock with the aid of a Police officer who was inside the building at the time. The Police officer operated the handle from the inside, whilst the carpenter examined the tongue of the door locking mechanism from the other side. The tongue moved slightly but would not retract sufficiently to enable the door to open."

Now the two revelations I mention above as stated by the Tasmania's DPP should scare the heck out of anyone even slightly interested in the justice process! Let us consider exactly what Mr. Bugg has admitted to and in which he was a willing participant:

On the 30th April 1996 – 2 days after the most horrific massacre in Australia's history was perpetrated - the Broad Arrow Cafe was a crime scene, at the time indicated by Police tape all about the building.

- i. Importantly, few people if any would be unaware that it is a felony for *anybody* (including a Police Constable), to wilfully enter a crime scene and interfere with *anything*. So;
- ii. Who instructed John Edwards¹⁸, Bugg's nameless "carpenter employed by the Authority", to nail-up the doors and windows and paint out the latter? For John Edwards should have been charged by Police because this was a wilful, felonious act. And if these felonies are not bad enough, then;
- iii. Why does Mr. Bugg not explain to the public – as we now know – that the door in receipt of this felonious attention, *had already been nailed up* by John Edwards and surely the carpenter's memory was not so bad as to forget he's already earlier nailed up the Gift Shop

¹⁸ The *Independent*, Hobart Tas. Thursday 02 May 1996, tells the public: *"John Edwards, a carpenter at the tourist centre, finished painting the cafe's windows so that passers-by could no longer glimpse the blood-stained legacy of the charnel house that it became last Sunday afternoon."* So now we know why Mr's Bugg was so coy as to not name John Edwards as tasked with the job of painting-out the widows and the Gift Shop door and nailing-up all windows and the other doors except for the wheelchair entrance.

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door! So why did Edwards and the unnamed Constable test the operation of the latch as Edwards knew full well that its operation had no bearing whatsoever on the door being inoperative!

Here is exampled from out of Mr. Bugg's mouth, two further participants in this aspect of the perversion of the course of justice! No wonder Damien simply nominates the co-felon as a simply a "Police officer".

This incident is on the record as occurring, so why was the Police officer not questioned at length by the DPP? Answer: Because it would have interfered with Mr. Bugg's true agenda. Why was the witness not asked to explain as to whether or not the door did open and if not why not? Of course, we can now identify the mystery "carpenter" as John Edwards but of the Policeman's identity he remains unknown. What purpose is served by all this secrecy and these disturbing felonious acts?

During his questioning of Historic Site maintenance staff, Mr. Bugg was informed some of these staff had claimed to have actually exited the Gift Shop area via the Fire Escape Door "shortly before" the day of the massacre, without encountering any malfunction of the interior handle of the latch set.

As we can now state with certainty, by acting upon instructions to nail the door shut, Mr. Edwards had indeed completed that task 'about 2 weeks prior the massacre'. So in reference to the above claim by Mr Bugg: Who, when, and how many, from among the maintenance staff on the Historic Site made their alleged tranquil exits? Surely these unnamed witnesses who exited the Fire Escape Door without any hindrance, must have done so before the door was nailed up by John Edwards. Was it Mr. Bugg or the mystery witnesses who were blurring the story so as to save the former onsite carpenter?

It is a long established fact, human nature is a constant. So please consider the continuing mediocrity displayed by the DPP Report text. In hindsight, we really shouldn't be surprised to read Mr. Bugg states he was told by the, *"manager in charge of this area of the building [that she] verbally reported the matter [of the malfunction of the door] to a member of the maintenance team approximately 2 weeks prior to the 28th April 1996."* Mr. Bugg also mentions others among his office staff were involved in some of the phone work among witnesses, so keep this fact in mind when shortly a *faux pa* of some magnitude is shown to be imbedded within the Bugg Report.

We have learned that acting upon instructions issued by the manager in charge of commercial operations, Ms Lesley Kirby, that the OIC of on-site maintenance John Featherstone, in turn relayed those instructions verbally to John Edwards to take out of service the Fire Escape Door at The Broad Arrow Cafe by nailing it shut – contrary to regulations in force and every, common sense besides. As far as I can establish this action was *a commercial decision* that ignored all welfare considerations.

In examining the issue thirteen years after the event, I tried very hard to be objective and positive during my overall investigation. However, I must say, regarding this particular segment, I found those principles sorely tested. The DPP's composition of what we are led to believe is his own work, demonstrates a particularly evasive style, which raises more questions than it answers. When it suits his agenda, he has named witnesses and/or persons involved; equally when it suits, witnesses remain either anonymous or in one particular case, he has stooped to nothing less than a con! Let me explain:

In questioning the Historic Site's staff to ascertain just who issued instructions to whom and what the effect of those instructions were in the scheme of the tragedy that Sunday, Mr. Bugg would have the reader assume he and he alone carried out the whole of the investigation. For me to suggest the following text proves this inference to be misleading is an understatement, so judge for yourself if you think I'm being pedantic:

The entire instruction regarding the claimed 'inoperative door latch' was claimed to have been verbal and no more than a passing desultory request by the witness whom Mr. Bugg refers to only as originating from the "Commercial Operations Manager" and whom he goes on to state issued this

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“request” in the car-park, “off the cuff” to the maintenance officer concerned; “*Could you get someone to look at the door?*”

Is Mr Bugg suggesting the reader should believe without question, that just nine words was the extent of this crucial *instruction* he deliberately chooses to devalue to *a request*? Could this unsworn statement be nothing less than a shrewd attempt by the witness, *facilitated by a willing Mr. Bugg*, to pervert the course of justice?

But when Mr. Bugg adds “padding” to this unsworn account, he exposes the forgoing almost to the basket labelled “irrelevant”, when he states:

“As I have said previously the maintenance officer¹⁹ denies that the conversation occurred and the Commercial Operations Manager, now self-employed in another part of the State, was interviewed by me by telephone and he does not have any recall of this conversation.” So let us examine this paragraph carefully, and allow me to make the following observations:

- a. I suggest Mr. Bugg never spoke personally even by telephone, to the Commercial Operations Manager (COM) employed by PAHSMA at the time of the tragedy.
- b. I also suggest for Mr. Bugg to claim, that in 1997, the COM had left PAHSMA’s employ and at the time Mr. Bugg claims he conducted his interview was, “self-employed in another part of the State,” is simply an untruth.
- c. I also further suggest even Mr. Bugg has neither the ability nor the knowledge to change the gender of a witness as he claims to have done, when he refers to the COM as a male; “he”.
- d. I believe the person he is referring to in this instance, answers to the name “Lesley” and in writing this paragraph Mr. Bugg (or his scribe?) has assumed, wrongly I believe, that “Lesley” was a male, when in fact Lesley is a female and was as you will see later in this article, certainly captured in a publicity photo-shoot, published among the pages of the 2002 PAHSMA Financial Report and captioned as Lesley Kirby.

So, what on earth is Mr. Bugg attempting to do in this instance? And, if this examples the standard of the investigation which is the basis of his official Report on the door, forgive me for asking; what other tall stories therein has he signed off on as ‘fact’?

In truth, Bugg’s attempt to bury the matter of “that door” produced an inexcusable and blatant white wash; the Bugg Report is the Establishment’s version of events and some of his conclusions are not anything approaching fact.

It really seems an irony. Clearly, Mr. Bugg demonstrates a huge conflict of interest in even accepting his commission in this particular instance. After all, Damien Bugg (like the Hon Ray Groom), could not hide a burning desire to see Martin Bryant prosecuted and incarcerated for a very long time as the ‘lone gunman’ and responsible for the deaths of all 35 people at and about Port Arthur and so to ensure litigation for damages by any of the visitors against the Tasmania Government would fail; even the Government’s own staff at the Historic Site were treated with the same contempt.

Most are unaware that it was Mr. Groom who delighted in telling a witness at a Peninsula gathering soon after Martin Bryant was hospitalised, *‘be assured he [Martin Bryant] is suffering. We have got him lying on his burns’*. The orthodoxy had to have their lone whipping-boy upon whom they could steer the public’s outrage. At successive anniversaries and 16 years on, this process is still being reinforced by some of the media lackeys, in the form of TV-promoted books advancing bizarre and outlandish untruths, unsupported by any credible evidence whatsoever, so as to reinforce Martin Bryant’s plea of “Guilty” and aided willingly by the vocal dogs of war, the NCGC global leftists.

¹⁹ This un-named witness surely is Mr. Peter Bourke. ed

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Understandably, after all the energies expended by Mr Doyle to produce his robust 100-plus-page Report released in June 1997, by contrast, the 52-page 'Bugg Report' was puny. The Bugg report was hastily assembled for release in a few weeks and by July 23, 1997 and curiously, Damien Bugg QC made just two findings:

1. That 'the door' was not marked as an exit, and;
2. He was unable to determine that any person had attempted to escape through the door.

Of these two conclusions, the second is quite absurd and very insulting. Those denied egress in their attempt to escape the bullets and as a result who died there inside the Gift Shop cannot speak up in their own defence; their memory has been treated with outrageous contempt by Damien Bugg QC and surviving witnesses like Ms Carolyn Laughton and Mrs Jenny Moors are totally at odds with Bugg. I would equate Bugg's outrageous conclusions as to liken them to him suggesting that in the case of a hypothetical crashed airliner: Passengers seated beside an escape hatch that had been deliberately rendered inoperative, and who subsequently drowned in the plane's cabin after ditching and sinking beneath the waves, may well have been eaten by sharks if they had escaped via that escape hatch into the sea!

From within the text of his Report, Mr Bugg is so arrogant to expose his contempt for the reader's intelligence when by his own admission the empirical, material evidence – the door - was wilfully interfered with even additionally by his own intervention, resulting in the destruction of its integrity.

Bugg tells us that when he visited Port Arthur in July of 1997, he was informed by another of his unnamed persons; "...the door had been retained and stored by the maintenance staff following the partial demolition of the Broad Arrow Cafe." So a "partial demolition" was admitted as being undertaken after authorisation by an already discredited management, but to whose advantage?

Here Bugg is admitting to the fact the door had deliberately been removed from the wall of the Gift Shop in the Broad Arrow Cafe. Protocols normally observed in all crime scene investigations, would automatically see such interference attract - as a minimum - a strong rebuke from any credible investigator, but not Damien Bugg. However and in spite of Mr. Bugg's implied approval of tampering with arguably the most controversial piece of evidence there among the Broad Arrow Cafe crime scene, he did confirm one vital fact when he stated:

"When I examined the door on Tuesday the 15th July 1997, I could see no signs of paint scraping on the shutting edge of the door which would indicate that the door itself had jammed within the door frame."

What Mr Bugg has confirmed for us here is the fact, the painted face of the lock stile of the mortised, glass panelled Gift Shop door, exhibited no scuff marks proving the door had never scraped against the door frame jamb when operated. This is exactly what other witnesses have already stated. Of course Bugg had a motive for mentioning this fact; he needed to persuade the reader to look towards the Lockwood Latchset as the scapegoat. But to support that hypothesis, he passed at least some of the responsibility to a locksmith, as we shall see directly.

In the paragraphs below the sub-heading "**Inspection of the Door July 1997**", Bugg delivers a hearsay reason as fact when he stated: "*In the process of demolition the internal handle of the door had been broken by a falling beam...*" How can he possibly state this is what actually occurred at time of demolition, or was Bugg there? No, I believe he made this statement as a deliberate tactic so as to add the inference that this particular "damage" was superficial and that it had occurred during a normal unrelated event. To this author, it would seem not entirely out of the question, that the removal/damage to the door and the locking mechanism was more than likely a deliberate act by

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person or persons un-named, in an attempt to conceal the earlier felony of nailing-up the door and so, did not Bugg just compound the enormity of a possible earlier criminal act?

If the forgoing is not bad enough, Mr Bugg then goes on to tell us, *"I requested the maintenance staff to remove the handle and locking mechanism by drilling off the screw heads of the retaining screws so that I could bring the lock to town and have it examined by an expert."*²⁰

Damien Bugg transported this latching mechanism in its now compromised state to Mr. Brain Measday, the Senior Locksmith at Jacksons in Hobart, for report in the back of a vehicle. In light of the compromised and incomplete report which followed, little wonder that when with a copy of his report in my hand, and upon approaching Brian Measday in the family's Wagga Wagga (NSW) doors and locks store some time later, to have Measday respond to several questions his report raises, a look of horror came over him like a school boy who'd been caught cheating an exam-paper. Obviously to see his own report in my hand flustered him and fumbling for words he took a rain check as he withdrew in haste. Though here one point needs to be made very clear:

Although there has been undoubted conspiracies aimed at concealing the facts surrounding the nailing up of the Gift Shop fire escape door, nevertheless, I can find absolutely no evidence to support any notion, which some people have expressed, to suggest the nailing up of the door was part of some conspiratorial procedure carried out in preparation for the terrorist operation. Such a suggestion is quite unsustainable and we should not forget the weighty evidence which suggests the Broad Arrow Cafe had not been selected as the primary killing field in the first place.

I believe that Bugg's role in all of this crime is unforgivable. Even for the surviving loved ones; they have been unacceptably and deliberately slighted by a callous authority as their deceased loved ones can tell no tales. After 16 years, even the intellectually impaired Martin Bryant (recently claimed by Professor Paul Mullen to have had "the mind of a 5-year-old"!) cannot defend himself while incarcerated and the indifferent public is bombarded at ever anniversary by a crass media, goaded on by an overbearing, lawless, authority. Even the internet is plastered with "blogs" that convey so many untruths they are deserving of no detailed reference, nor publicity by this author.

Mullen, Bugg, Avery, Groom et al, are clearly exposed as having grossly sullied The Law, as applied in The Commonwealth of Australia at the time. The Law clearly holds, that for a person to stand trial on such a serious misdemeanour, the mind of the accused — the *mens rea* — must be fit to be judged as a guilty mind. Still imbedded in our system of Law, criminal guilt requires not only that an act was performed (*actus reus*) but also, that the crime was performed with an appropriate mind-set. Having the intention to perform a crime is sufficient, but not necessary to *mens rea*. A person accused of such a serious misdemeanour below the age of eight years is automatically stuck out as not fulfilling these essential criteria.²¹

But as bad as the period 1996 to the present seems, since 2004 at the least, authority has gone a little further towards lunacy with their Police State, as now they demonstrate zeal to condone legislation and exhibit an enthusiasm to incarcerate citizens for *saying* something, *thinking* something, but not *doing* anything; it's immaterial that the 12 accused in the 2009/9 Melbourne "terrorist trial" happened to follow a particular religion: today it's Muslims, but from which ethnic grouping or individual philosophy will speech and or thought be the undoing of someone tomorrow?

²⁰ Ref to file Bugg Report on CD-Rom, Deceit & Terrorism – The massacre at Port Arthur by Andrew McGregor
²¹ ABC-TVs 13th anniversary 7.30Report, 28apr09

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Upon release of the Bugg Report, Historic Site members of staff on sick-leave were summoned by a phone call from Management to a meeting convened so as all staff could be seen to receive the Bugg Report. As the bureaucrat from Hobart introduced his subject to the gathering he promised, *'When you read this document, all your doubts and queries will be answered.'* This drew an interjection from among the hushed assembly I'm told, loud and clear: **"Don't hold your breath!"**

By this stage, Mrs. Scurr had realised a cover-up held full sway and was all-encompassing. In fact, Wendy Scurr remembers as few as two copies of the Bugg Report were delivered by this bureaucrat and he specifically instructed those assembled: *'Don't hand it about'*.

More bricks in the wall of silence... In spite of his instruction though, staff warmed up the photocopier and it soon spewed forth enough copies for every one of the staff. Though in retrospect, it's a wonder they weren't like this author, threatened with arrest for *"Breach of crown copyright,"* as occurred when Inspector Rod Smith, of the NSW Police, the 'Crime Manager' of the Wagga Wagga area, knocked on my door on Wednesday, 8 September 2004.

The reports produced by Woodland, Doyle, and Bugg were examined and re-examined in about 2003 by Andrew MacGregor and this author (when Revision IV of the CD-ROM was published) and I have yet again made another revision of that material for this article, and the issue surrounding the inoperative, nail-up Gift Shop door continues to be raised by people I meet among the public.

Until recent times Wendy Scurr has continued to speak out at every opportunity on this whole travesty of justice.

Both Graeme Scurr (in 2006) and then Wendy over very recent months have both had to undergo major surgery as a result of cancer. Like other survivors of the Port Arthur massacre, Wendy and indeed Graeme (even although his modesty may prompt a denial) have been told they both still suffer the residual effects of the massacre that has produced their health challenges. While they left Tasmania and have been for some time enjoying this wide brown land and catching up with family and their many friends, though the effects of their experiences in 1996 lurk close at hand.

Foundations Laid

During the course of my conversation with my reliable source, I learned that on the day of the tragedy John Edwards was not working on-site. But ironically and to an extraordinary extent, his earlier actions contributed to a controversy about the Gift Shop door, which has remained clouded until the recent revelations that were delivered by my source.

I also learned that after PAHSMA had taken over the operation of the Historic Site and in 1995, Lesley Kirby was employed by PAHSMA as the Site's Retail Manager. In June 1995 PAHSMA concluded negotiations for the takeover of the Broad Arrow Cafe from the previous lessee and operator, and incidentally a crucial witness on the day of the massacre, Mr. Jim Laycock, now deceased.

On July 1st of 1995, PAHSMA occupied the Broad Arrow Cafe and immediately lodged with Tasman Council, plans for major renovations to the building. But it seems Management kept changing their minds. Even before the plans bore the Tasman Council stamp of approval that permitted the structural renovations to the Cafe to commence. The 'flip-flop' Management, had tradesmen on-site and proceeding to carry out variations to those submitted plans, before having gaining the stamp of signed approval from the Tasman Council.

I have also learned that it was these 'variations to plan' which caused heated conversations between Retail Manager, Ms Lesley Kirby and the Council Building Inspector. As is pointed out in the Doyle Report, Mr. Neil Noye, Mayor of Tasman Council was put in an awkward position that exposed him

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to conflict of interest charges, when Mr. Noye accepted an invitation by PAHSMA executives that subsequently saw him as a director on the PAHSMA board. Mr. Doyle advised, "...it is not in the best interests of the community, nor Council, for such a role to continue."²²

The Doyle Report drew attention to the fact that these renovations to the Broad Arrow Cafe as seen by the Tasman Council Building Inspector when he called on-site, also showed the work to be: '...a complete change to the original proposal'.

When the Cafe was closed in 1995, to allow for the initial renovations to proceed, the kitchen area at least was photographed and the prints shown to Mrs. Wendy Scurr by none other than the Retail Manager, Ms Lesley Kirby, who explained at the time, by using these prints, as Retail Manager with the new owners (PAHSMA), she was intending to "straighten out" any building approval problems she encountered with the Tasman Council Building Inspector, because these photographs shown Mrs Scurr allegedly provided persuasive material evidence of the '*filthy state of the Cafe kitchen*' under which the previous tenant had been allowed to continue to operate, unhindered, for some considerable time by the same Tasman Council Health Officer/Building Inspector. So allegedly, armed with the photos, Lesley Kirby was intending to "lean on" the Council Inspector to get her way with approval of the unauthorised variations to the plans already submitted.

If the matter had been aired before the PAHSMA board (which then included Mr. Noye, the Mayor of the Tasman Council), one can only speculate, but surely the outcome would have been messy, to say the least. The Building Inspector's position would also have been compromised. Though I'm not prepared to speculate as to whether or not this situation was ever brought to the notice of Max Doyle.

As I understand it, Mrs. Scurr was left in no doubt by Lesley Kirby, that she enjoyed being able to use the photographs as 'leverage' so as to silence any official opposition that may have seen intervention by the Inspector in unauthorised variation work. So the variations to plan continued unhindered, without any official approval by Tasman Council officers as I understand it.

In the autumn of 1996, and around the 13th April, just before the massacre, it is alleged that a staff member working in the Gift Shop had made a complaint to their superiors of stock items for sale allegedly having been shop-lifted and the thief or thieves allowed to exit the Gift Shop via the "Fire Exit" door without restriction.

It has been further alleged that this is the trigger that caused the Commercial Operations Manager, Leslie Kirby, to verbally instruct the on-site maintenance officer John Featherstone to oversee the nailing-up of the door adjacent to the Gift Shop, in the Broad Arrow Cafe.

Save for the Broad Arrow Cafe main (south-easterly) entrance door to the Dining Room, the "Fire Exit" door provided the only practical alternative exit from the Gift Shop. Into the mortised timber frame of this glass panelled door there was affixed a Lockwood Exterior Escape Deadlatch, so as to facilitate unrestricted egress and limited, controlled access.²³

It has further been alleged by my source, that Mr. John Edwards, the Historic Site maintenance carpenter, soon after the massacre, confided in his then wife telling her that he wouldn't be in his awful predicament had he not been, "***instructed by John Featherstone to nail the exterior Gift Shop door shut, which he did.***"

It surely becomes apparent that as time went by and in face to face counselling sessions, staff would have asked awkward questions directly to the newly appointed counsellor John Edwards, even oblivious of what vital role the counsellor in the room with them had played in the matters they raised! One can but speculate as to the immediate effect their questions and statements may have

²² Ref The Doyle Report at 8.2.

²³ Ref CD-ROM, *A Gunsmith's Notebook on Port Arthur* @ p215, John Featherstone is mentioned by eye witness Lee-Anne Goodwin.

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injected into the sessions a situation that was untenable: "Awkward" seems an entirely inadequate description.

My source also alleges that as the extent of the effects of 'nailing up of the door' had upon colleagues and visitors to the Cafe that day sank in, Edwards apparently expressed to some at least, his enormous shock and remorse, especially regarding the deaths of Nicole Burgess and Elizabeth Howard.

I cannot recall knowing anyone who goes through life spotless when it comes to not making bad decisions. We are not privy to the circumstances surrounding the issuing of the instruction allegedly issued by John Featherstone that led to John Edwards obeying those instructions, nor are we privy to words of the instruction put to John Featherstone either. There is so much more to the story that my source has not been told. So we can but imagine the effect upon both Edwards and his wife of that time, save that I was told as the revelations soaked into his mind, they *'really upset him badly'*.

Then one must consider the lingering effect of Mr. Edwards is twofold: not only carrying the burden of a concealing the truth of why the door was inoperable, but of being a party to the entire massacre cover-up as well. They surely are burdens no one should ever have to carry.

The status of the Gift Shop "Fire Exit" door prior to Sunday 28th April 1996, is corroborated by a staff member, **Lee-Anne Goodwin** who is on the record as stating: "**I worked the Sunday before in the Gift Shop with Robyn's niece and I went to have a cigarette and Robyn's niece, Nicole, told me that 'the door was broken'.**"²⁴

Lee-Anne has clearly informed us here that when she worked the rostered shift in the Broad Arrow Cafe Gift Shop, on Sunday 21st April 1996 — just seven days prior to the massacre — and her colleague for that shift Nicole Burgess (the niece of the Historic Site Visitor Services Manager, Robyn Cooper) was aware of the door being inoperable at least by 21.04.1996. On Sunday 28 April 1996, the day of the massacre, after 'swapping her shift with a work-mate' it was Nicole Burgess who worked with a colleague, Elizabeth Howard in the Broad Arrow Gift Shop. I cannot say that Nicole or Elizabeth were aware that it was Edwards who allegedly nailed the door frame to the jamb. But I can say with certainty, both young ladies knew full well this particular "Fire Exit" door was inoperable when the shooting commenced in the Dining Room. What these revelations expose is this: Nicole Burgess being very aware that any attempt to egress the fire escape door of the Gift Shop was futile, must have communicated this fact quickly to her colleague Elizabeth Howard for she knew this door had earlier been **deliberately rendered inoperative**.

Realising their position was precarious when the shooting erupted, Nicole and Elizabeth would have known this route to escape the bullets was not an option as this escape route had been deleted. As no other route to safety could be reached by anyone in that area at the time, other than through the deadly field of fire of the gunman or gunmen within the Cafe dining room, their only option was to lie down behind the Gift Shop counter in the vain hope they may escape those bullets; it was here later Wendy Scurr found their bodies and checked both for signs of life.

After investigating this matter for some 12 years or so very thoroughly, my colleagues and I had some years ago reached the only conclusion possible; we believed someone had nailed-up the door prior to the 28th April.

Legally speaking though, we knew that without corroborative evidence, our conclusions weren't even 'hearsay', they were just hypothesis. But the latest revelations delivered by my reliable source have clarified the situation to a considerable extent: Conclusions reached by Andrew MacGregor and this author before we published Revision-IV of the CD-Rom are now vindicated. Back then, the suspected culprit was just that and not able to be clearly identified, but now the truth is out.

²⁴ Transcript of Senator Len Harris' teleconference, 16sep00

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Surely the reader has now come to understand that those in authority – and right to the top – must have known all the sordid details of the action and those people who contributed to that action, and as it was just like The *Mercury* newspaper headlines suggested, and "Too Hot To Handle" so it was hoped all could be 'swept under the carpet'. Choosing his words ever so carefully, Damien Bugg QC stated at page 17 of the Bugg Report:

Just two days after the massacre and, **"On the 30th April 1996 a carpenter employed by the Authority was required to paint out the windows of the Cafe building and secure the doors and windows (with the exception of the disabled persons entrance door) against unwanted entry. This was affected by nailing the doors and windows to their frames."**

Did those in charge expect disabled people to require entry to the crime scene? What a bizarre statement, and also please note: Mr. Bugg firstly is ever so careful not to establish who issued this instruction. As well, the necessity for the door to be "**nailed shut**", so he claims, was necessarily secured, not because of any allegation of earlier shop-lifting, but because of the massacre of the 28th April to prevent unwarranted entry: this is a barefaced lie. Who deliberately provided this false information to Damien Bugg or was Mr. Bugg a willing party to this conspiracy to pervert the course of justice? Because as stated previously, the door had by this stage already been nailed shut!

Even if this perversion was not deliberate, Mr. Bugg further conceals the facts by deliberately choosing to bury the door among all of the other Broad Arrow Cafe doors and windows and he ends up making excuses for Management! And, in the next breath the same door is '**nailed**' to its 'frame'. Mr. Bugg has made more irrelevant the Gift Shop door by burying the "Fire Exit" door at the Gift Shop among the building's other various doors and windows! I believe it can be rightly said: Mr. Bugg's excuses are no more than a blatant cover-up.

Was the order above **re-issued** on 30.4.96 — two days after the massacre — in truth initiated by Lesley Kirby, and if so, did this action not have the effect of attempted concealment of an earlier negligent or criminal act? Was this second order issued by PAHSMA's CEO, a board member, police, or a politician? I would contend many had motive and opportunity, only some may well have profited. But an appropriate Court should adjudicate this whole matter sooner rather than later.

Not surprisingly the unhealthy environment that now existed on-site was motivation enough for staff moves: three staff members were first shifted away from access and the influence of displeased staff on the Historic Site and it was much more practical to move "Mohammed" than the mountain.

First to leave the PAHS was John Edwards. During this time of flux, the stress and radiating effects of this tragedy upon the carpenter's family must have also been enormous. My source informed me that it was about this time that Mr. and Mrs. Edwards separated. Another Peninsula family became a victim of the massacre at Port Arthur. I'm told it was a development only ever exacerbated (and to an alarming degree my source claims), among family members entangled in that break-down. The circumstances surrounding John Edwards' move to Corrective Services inside HM Risdon Prison is not clear. But importantly I believe his new employment saw Mr. Edwards retain the same paymaster: the State Government of Tasmania.

My source claims that Mrs. Edwards has moved well away from the Peninsula and even left Tasmania for a mainland home. And who could blame her! I do hope she has been able to pick up the pieces of her life and regained some measure of happiness and contentment she deserves; a new lease on life and fresh start.

But in Tasmania as I understand, it wasn't long before John Edwards changed his employment yet again; this time moving to the warmer northern city of Launceston. Whether his third job-change was made in hope of a better position or a desire to put some distance between his place of employment

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and the Historic Site, I can but speculate. So what then of the primary instructor in matters surrounded the nailing up of the door? Perhaps the Retail Manager held to the adage: Lightening never strikes in the same place twice, as for a while she stayed on.

In the long run, it was deemed as impossible by Wendy Scurr, to even contemplate attempting to return to the position she loved as an Information Officer at the PAHS. I doubt the Board – even the new Board of Directors – would have warmed to the prospect of Wendy’s return, as it seems likely she was thought to be still a ‘trouble maker’. So what to do with Wendy Scurr? It was a conundrum for which someone soon found a solution, well so they thought.

After the sessions of treatment under medical supervision by Dr Paddy Burgess-Watson, and being well trained by St John’s Ambulance, Mrs. Scurr was offered a *newly created position* with Tasmania Ambulance Service at their Head Office in Hobart and tasked, *“To train ambulance personnel so as to upgrade their expertise to paramedic level,”* Wendy explained.

Mrs. Scurr told the author she was even “enthusiastic” at the prospect of the apparent challenge in this new position and took with her a well founded “confidence” and an ability to carry-off the tasks ahead with aplomb. Wendy knew well the Officer-In-Charge and many of the other ‘ambos’ on the job, holding all of them in a high regard. Mrs. Scurr knew many of them professionally quite well, having served as a volunteer ‘ambo’ on the Peninsula herself for some considerable time.

Though it was naive of any of the conspirators of this subterfuge to think for a moment, ‘ambos’ would never ‘talk shop’ and raise the subject of the massacre with Mrs. Scurr, a prime witness to that Code Brown operation. After all, Wendy Scurr played such a pivotal role in the tragedy: not only did she make *several* critical phone calls on the 28th April 1996, but Mrs. Scurr is on the record as making the initial phone call at 1332hrs to Police in Hobart.

As is the case most times, First Aid at Port Arthur that day called for innovation, initiative, professional expertise and a very cool head, so as to ensure success. After Mrs. Scurr and her colleagues along with helpers from the public, first entered the Broad Arrow Cafe, triaged and administered their First Aid to those who were clinging to life, and the Paramedics and Ambulance Officers arrived, not a single patient was lost, and this was in spite of the fact the first lone police Constable did not arrive for 2hrs and 25 minutes after the first ambulance!

But for Mrs. Scurr, the *movers and shakers* had other ideas: three days after taking up her new position in Hobart, Wendy was overheard talking to colleagues about “that door”.

Immediately, Wendy was summoned to the boss’s office where he delivered an ultimatum: *‘You must cease talking about ‘the door’ here Wendy, if you don’t you will be fired.’* The offer for her to fill this newly created position required her to seriously consider taking lodgings in Hobart, otherwise it would have required she drive herself daily to her employment, a 200 km round-trip to Hobart. This prospect suddenly came into focus. Even although remember, at this stage Wendy was suffering and was then being treated for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the OIC had reacted in a silly ill-conceived and unprofessional manner.

Wendy told me recently she left the boss she once respected in no doubt: *“Hell will have to freeze over before I’ll stop telling people the truth about this cover-up which has denied me and my colleagues – who’s loved ones died behind that door - any justice or closure. I’ll never rest, and will keep on trying to right this wrong if it takes forever. So you can shove your job. I resign.”*

To her great credit, Wendy Scurr refused to compromise her principles for ‘thirty pieces of silver’ yet again. But the costs were mounting. Now, on the other hand, Lesley Kirby remained on the Historic Site, until the ‘trouble makers’ were further dispersed, for I have been under her gaze myself in about

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2001, when along with Mrs. Scurr and Andrew MacGregor, we all visited Port Arthur on two occasions so as to ensure we had firsthand experience of the geography of the Historic Site and its precincts. Lesley Kirby was certainly still employed there much later when publicity shots were captured which grace the publication of the 2002 PAHSMA Financial Report.

But shortly after the site was revamped, Lesley Kirby made a quantum leap in career advancement, when she was appointed to a position with the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, at 40 Macquarie Street, Hobart where Sir Guy Green was Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Royal Society representative; Sir Guy was Lesley's new boss. Sir Guy Green had from his appointment in 1995, been the Governor of Tasmania, remaining in that role until succeeded by the controversial Richard Butler in 2004, and whom was forced to resign after just ten months into his tenure.

I'm reminded though, of that famous saying regarding events that 'are planned to happen that way' when politics are the vital ingredient. Port Arthur and the "Fire Exit" door seem too surreptitiously entwined in the intrigues of all these movements of key individuals, to pass the reshuffling of players off as coincidental. It would be very naive to suggest such departures, relocations and career changes were not of comfort or advantage to those at the top of the ruling class of Tasmania's "royal" families.

But, was Lesley looking for even greener pastures? For soon Ms Kirby was off yet again, to a further career advancement and this time Lesley was appointed Director of the Royal Hobart Botanical Gardens. Why do I get the feeling her appointment had little to do with green fingers or any latent expertise or penchant for botany?

Undoubtedly, there are many more revelations that will come to light as time goes by, which may challenge directly the status quo as regards the public knowledge of what actually occurred there at and about Port Arthur that autumn day in April 1996. But one question is now settled by the forgoing, it is now up to AUSTRALIANS – every one of you to seek out justice for all who have been affected by those events and this awful cover-up.

Summary

More recently the public have witnessed one professional from among this Hobart 'club' of malefactors, referred to in the Court as a "thieving lawyer" exhibiting a fractious display to the Court, which prompted the judge to describe him as "almost truculent", regarding his attitude towards repayment of the \$500,000 he'd stolen from clients. Though I would suggest he stole much more than money from Martin Bryant! The judge's description was confirmed, when shortly the Court of Criminal Appeal agreed to increase his sentence. Presently the conviction may see this common thief and fraudster enjoy the company of his peers for 4½ years. Possibly though a fellow inmate and former client, who now approaches middle age, the intellectually challenged Martin Bryant who will certainly pose no danger to his former "brief" even though he deserted the young man with the mind of a 'five-year-old' in his hour of need: it's a non contest isn't it? After all, it was on the 13th anniversary the Forensic Psychologist Prof Paul Mullen, told all viewing Australians of that TV item, Martin Bryant has 'the mind of a five-year-old'. ²⁵

Andrew MacGregor, this author and several others who need not be named have all contributed greatly to exposing all the criminal actions that were intended to remain concealed. It now begs the question, what has the reader done to expose these awful crimes against our freedom? Do you feel the task confronting you as too daunting? Evil only ever prospers when good men do nothing...and then, as I edited this essay in July of 2012, I was reminded of the poignant words delivered from the steps of Darwin Court recently, after a frustrating sole-destroying 32-year-wait:-

²⁵ ABC-TVs 7.30Report, 28 April 2009.

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"I'm here today to tell you, even when you think all is lost, you can get justice." - Michael Chamberlain - 12.06.2012; at the conclusion of the third Coronal Inquest into the death of his daughter Azaria, taken by a dingo in 1980 near Ayer's Rock, (now called "Uluru"), in the Northern Territory of Australia.

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